

✔ If you are having a new bore drilled, make sure it is located as far as practical from potential sources of contamination such as septic tanks, offal holes and effluent disposal areas.

✔ If renewing a pressure tank, explore the option of fibreglass replacement. These do not corrode and will last longer than a steel tank.

✔ Add a backflow prevention device, especially if your water system is connected to stock water troughs or used to fill sprayers or tankers. This will prevent contaminated water flowing back into your water supply.

✔ Remember to protect pumps, hoses and fittings from frost damage.

✔ Avoid spraying herbicide around your bore or well to control weed growth.

✔ Unused or abandoned wells and bores should be securely sealed and preferably filled in with clean clay or soil.

✔ The usual life span of a bore is between 20-30 years.

Using the metal casing as an earth for an electric fence or power supply increases the rate of corrosion and will shorten the life of your bore.

Our thanks to Environment Southland for the creation and supply of text and images that make up the majority of this pamphlet.

How well is your Well?

For further information about topics listed in this pamphlet or any matters related to groundwater quality or quantity please contact:

A guide to protecting the quality and reliability of your groundwater supply

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Protect the quality of your water supply

Contamination of bores and wells by bacteria is a major cause of groundwater quality problems on the West Coast.

Taking 10 minutes to check the condition of your bore or well may help prevent you or your family getting sick and will protect the quality of our groundwater resource.

Run through the checklist below to see how safe your water supply is:

✓ Check the casing extends far enough above ground to prevent stormwater runoff entering the bore or well. If possible, place a sloping concrete pad around the casing to deflect stormwater and prevent weed growth.

✓ Check the top of the bore or well is securely sealed to prevent entry of foreign material.

(Tip: silage tape is excellent for sealing around pipes and cables to make your wellhead secure).

✓ Remove chemicals, fertilisers etc in vicinity of bore or well and keep the area free of rubbish.

✓ Fence off the bore or well to prevent stock access.

✓ Check all pipes and fittings for leaks.

✓ Check pumps are not leaking oil or grease.

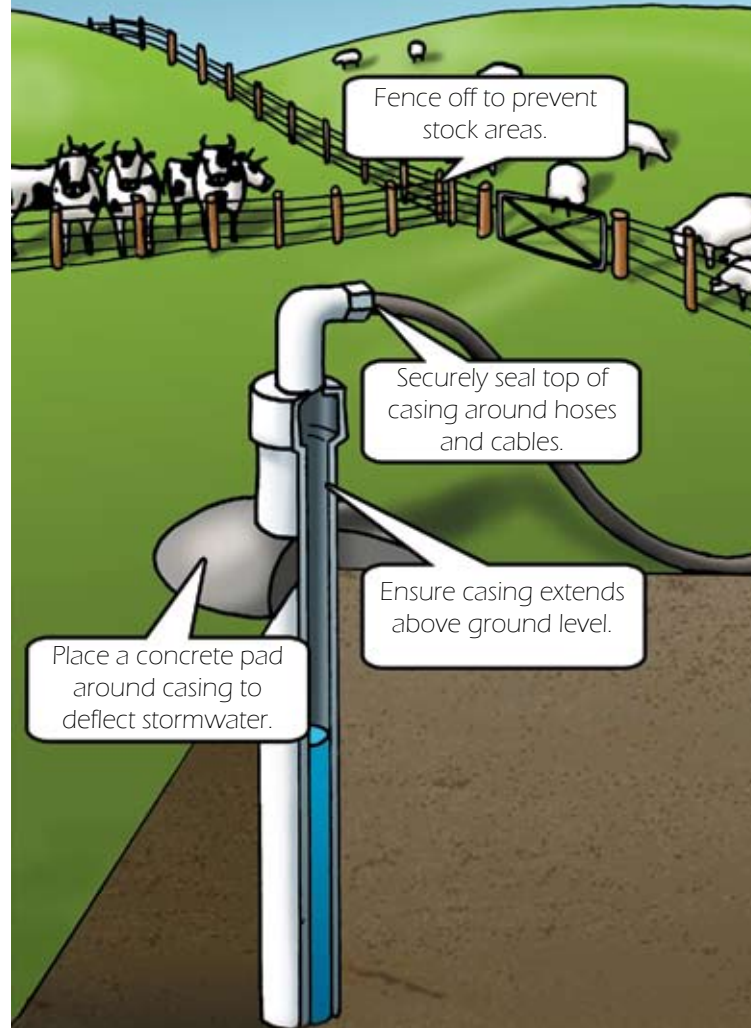


Have a sample of your well or bore tested once a year for Faecal Coliform bacteria at one of the laboratories listed in the Yellow Pages (approximate cost \$25).

Contact Community & Public Health or the West Coast Regional Council for advice if sample results indicate contamination of your water supply.



Ensure water filters are regularly maintained.



Maintenance tips

In many cases, problems with the reliability of bores and wells can be avoided by regular maintenance. Regular maintenance may also help reduce pumping and equipment replacement costs.



Regularly flush out pressure tank to remove sediment and ensure sufficient air is retained.

Insufficient air in the pressure tank reduces its ability to hold pressure requiring frequent running of the pump to maintain supply. This increases power consumption and wear and tear on pumps.



Have your bore regularly flushed out by an experienced contractor.

Over time, bores and wells become less efficient as the casing corrodes and fine sediment accumulates around the well screen. This progressively reduces the rate water is able to flow into the bore or well until it can no longer keep up with the pump and it effectively "runs dry". Regular flushing will maintain yield and extend the life of the bore.



Simple treatment options are available to control slime growths in the bore or reticulation system.

Naturally occurring bacteria, which live on iron or manganese in groundwater, occur in many bores and wells. In excessive numbers, these bacteria cause slime growth which can clog pumps, pipes and fittings such as ball cock valves on stock troughs. This problem can be treated relatively simply, contact the West Coast Regional Council for details.