

# Wildfire Resources for Private Well Owners

## [Defensible Space—Prepare Your Home](#)

Private well users returning after an evacuation, may not have safe water to drink. Power loss can cause backflows, water treatment equipment failures, and other problems. For wells that are free of nitrate, boil tap water for one minute to kill germs (boiling will concentrate nitrate) until water can be tested.

Things to look for after wildfire:

- Damage to electrical wires and connectors that supply power to well.
- Damage to above-ground PVC pipes used with the well to bring water into the home.
- Damage to well houses and equipment, such as chlorinators, filters and electronic controls.
- Damage to pressure tanks, potentially caused by exposure to excessive heat.
- Damage to storage tanks, vents and overflow pipes.

Contact a licensed contractor to repair any damage found to well or distribution system. In the event of damage to your well, pipes, or related equipment, flooding, potential contamination, or extended power outages collect water samples and have a [professional water lab](#) analyze the quality of your water. At a minimum, water should be tested for [coliform bacteria](#). If chemical or other contamination of the well is suspected, ask the lab about other tests they can run.

Contact your [local county health department](#) for additional information regarding private wells.

- [Drinking Water In Your Home](#). Resources for consumers and private well owners.
- [Emergency Publications for Consumers](#).
- [Publicaciones en Español](#).
- [Emergency Disinfection of Drinking Water EPA Publication 816-F-15-003 \(PDF\)](#)
- [Treating Drinking Water for Emergency Use 331-115 \(PDF\)](#)
- [Color, taste, and odor problems in drinking water 331-286 \(PDF\)](#)

For more information you may also contact the Washington State Department of Health, Office of Drinking Water [Drinking Water Contacts and Office Location | Washington State Department of Health](#).