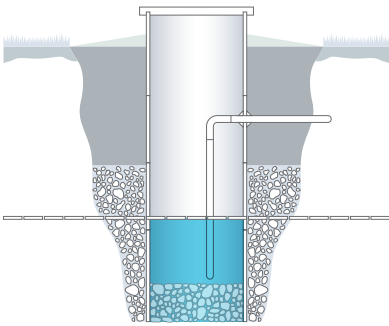




Facts About Dug Wells

Get the dirt on dug wells



Rhode Island has beautiful historic and rural homes, and it's hard not to love a home with character. If the property gets its water from a dug well, it's good to learn more about it. Whether you own a home that has a dug well or if you are thinking about buying one, here is some information that might be helpful.

What is a dug well?

A dug well is usually a hole that is 10 to 30 feet deep and produces water. The hole is usually lined with stones, bricks, tiles, or other solid material. The cover can be wood, stone, or concrete.

Are dug wells allowed?

Dug wells are not allowed for new drinking water wells, but homes can use one if it is already there. If you are buying or selling a home with a dug well, the well has to pass a water quality/potability test and comply with all plumbing codes.

The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) does not recommend using a dug well to supply your drinking water. Public water systems cannot use dug wells as a water source.

What are the dangers of a dug well?

- **Contamination:** Dug wells are shallow, so many things on the ground like fertilizer, gasoline, or lawn chemicals can get in to the water. Dug wells should be tested more often than drilled wells, at least once a year. For testing recommendations and a list of state-certified test labs, visit www.health.ri.gov/water/for/privatewellowners
- **Bacteria:** It can be hard to keep a dug well sanitary. Keep the cover sealed on the well opening and make sure there is no fertilizer or anything that can attract mice, bugs, or other pests nearby.
- **Running dry:** Dug wells are more likely to run out of water in hot weather or if there is not enough rain.

Who can I call if I have questions?

Call RIDOH's Center for Drinking Water Quality at **401-222-6867** or email DOH.RIDWQ@health.ri.gov