Coliform Action Response

If your water tests POSITIVE for Coliforms, determine mode of entry and/or source of Coliforms.

Possible Sampling Procedure Problems:
1. Poor choice of sampling tap (Avoid the following)
   • swivel
   • outside
   • basement
   • leaking
   • flexible hose
   • corroded
2. Aerator not removed
3. Tap not flushed before sampling
4. Touched/dropped sterile bottle or cap
5. Treatment device attached to faucet not removed

Possible Distribution System Problems:
1. Contaminated or biofouled water treatment devices
   • softeners
   • particulate filters
   • carbon filters
   • reverse osmosis units
2. Plumbing renovations
3. Leaky fixtures, distribution lines or cisterns
4. Malfunctioning pressure tank
5. Cross connections

Possible Well/Casing/Grouting/Platform Problems:
1. New well construction or well repairs not followed with adequate disinfection
2. Structural integrity compromised
   • hole in casing
   • platform cracked
   • sanitary cap, seal or screen compromised
3. Poorly constructed or obsolete well/casing
   • brick-lined well
   • water in well pit
   • no or inadequate grout
4. Shallow or susceptible well too close to coliform source(s)
   • septic system/laterals
   • feedlot, barnyard, confinement runoff
   • abandoned well/cistern
5. Flood water intrusion

If entry and/or source of coliforms are not found, follow remedial schematic on page 6.
Well Water Quality and Home Treatment Systems

First Review Sampling Technique
If technique was suspect, resample. If technique was good, proceed.

Take corrective measures to fix the problem.
- This will require cleaning, disinfecting and/or shock chlorinating as necessary.
- Expert consultation with a certified well driller or pump installer or county sanitarian is recommended.
- Don’t forget to properly seal unused or abandoned wells or cisterns.

Coliforms PRESENT
Resample to verify success of corrective measures

Coliforms ABSENT
Resample in near future and at least annually, preferably in late spring or fall; or anytime changes occur in taste, odor or appearance.

Entry/Source/Problem FOUND

Entry/Source/Problem NOT FOUND

Resample at strategic locations to isolate possible entry sources.
- Eliminate well problems by collecting from tap at well (e.g. sampling tap). If no well tap, then closest tap from well.
- Eliminate distribution problems by collecting before and after treatment devices and major system fixtures, components or out buildings.
- If coliforms are found in well AND distribution samples there is most likely a well problem(s).
- If coliforms are not found in well samples but are found in distribution samples, there is most likely a distribution problem(s).