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## HEALTH DEPARTMENT ADVISES HAMILTON COUNTY RESIDENTS OF LOCAL PRIVATE WELL WATER CONTAMINATION



**Contact:**

Mark Lander

DOH-Hamilton

[Mark.lander@flhealth.gov](mailto:Mark.lander@flhealth.gov)

(850) 792-1414

**HAMILTON COUNTY**-The Florida Department of Health in Hamilton County (DOH-Hamilton) is advising residents with homes near or along the Withlacoochee River of confirmed private well water contamination in the area. DOH-Hamilton is recommending residents and homeowners who notice any change in the color of their well water to contact the health department to arrange to receive a well water sample kit.

If their well water has experienced recent discoloration or they believe they've been impacted due to flooding, they should also begin boiling well water as a precaution or use bottled water until a sample has tested.

At this time, the health department is waiving the fee to provide a sampling kit to homeowners with discolored well water located within the areas of concern along the river within Hamilton County. If the test reveals bacteria, the well and water system will need to be disinfected per instructions that can be obtained at the department.

Water contamination presents several health hazards to people and may contain bacteria that could cause gastro-intestinal and other diseases. Children and older adults, as well as people with weakened immune systems, are particularly vulnerable to disease so every precaution should be taken if well water is discolored.

**Boil water precaution instructions:**

Bring water to a rolling boil for one minute and cool before use. Common unscented household bleach (4 to 6 percent active ingredient) can be used effectively as a chlorine disinfectant. Disinfect the water by adding 8 drops (about 1/8 teaspoon) of unscented household bleach per gallon of water, and then let it stand for 30 minutes. Repeat the procedure if the water is still cloudy.

This includes all the water used for drinking, making beverages or ice, cooking, brushing teeth, washing dishes and washing areas of the skin that have been cut or injured.

For more information on private well water, or to obtain a sampling kit, contact DOH-Hamilton at (386) 792-1414, ext. 222, or visit <http://hamilton.floridahealth.gov/>.

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