

Drinking Water and Land Program

Safe Drinking Water Supply for Rental Accommodations connected to a Private Well

According to Section 7 of the B.C. *Health Hazard Regulations* a landlord must not rent a rental unit unless it is connected to a community (permitted) water supply system or the landlord can provide the tenant with a supply of potable water for domestic (drinking, cooking and sanitation) purposes.

Potable means the water complies with the bacteriological standards stated in the *Drinking Water Protection Regulation* and the health related chemical parameters stated in the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality.

➤ **As a Tenant what should I know about my Drinking Water Supply?**

First, you should find out whether your drinking water supply comes from a private well or a community water supply. The landlord should be able to provide you with this information.

If the drinking water comes from a private source located on the property (i.e. a well), it is a good idea to know the location of the well. This way you can monitor activities around the source and report any problems or concerns to the landlord. This is especially important when the landlord does not live on the same property.

Ask your landlord for a copy of any water quality test results. A private water supply should be tested by an approved lab, for total coliform and E.coli bacteria, at least once or twice a year. Chemical parameters should be tested every 3 to 5 years. For more information on water testing go to www.healthlinkbc.ca, see File #05b "Should I Get My Well Water Tested?" or see Fraser Health's safety water tips for private well owners www.fraserhealth.ca/media/DrinkingWaterSafetyTips.pdf.



Continued

➤ **What Should I Do if I am Concerned about the Water?**

If you notice a change in the taste, colour or odour of the tap water and you have reason to believe the water is no longer potable, you should stop drinking the water and contact the landlord.

If the landlord is unable to identify and fix the problem within a reasonable period of time he/she must provide you with an alternate supply of water (i.e. bottled water from an approved source) for drinking and cooking as a temporary solution.

➤ **What if the landlord refuses to address my concerns about the Drinking Water?**

First, find out your "Rights & Responsibilities" by contacting the Residential Tenancy Branch at 1-800-665-8779 or on the web at www.rto.gov.bc.ca.

Another option is to call the Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre at 1-800-665-1185 or visit their website at www.tenants.bc.ca.

Next, to speak with an Environmental Health Officer, please call Fraser Health, Population Public Health Call Centre at 604-587-3936 and request to be connected to the Drinking Water and Land Program.

➤ **What will Fraser Health Do?**

Upon receipt of your complaint the EHO will take the appropriate action(s) to address and resolve your concern. This could include, but not limited to:

- a site inspection;
- sampling and testing the drinking water supply;
- contacting and/or sending a letter to the landlord; or
- the use of enforcement tools.

For more information on drinking water go to the website at www.fraserhealth.ca/drinkingwater