

## FAQs

Q. I have a water softener system, isn't that enough?

*A. A water softener system is used when the water is hard because of high mineral content. A water softener cannot take care of bacteria, metals, pesticides or any other potential contaminant in your well. It is important to test your well to find out if you need any other water treatment systems in addition to your water softener. (See **Section IV** and **Table 2** for a discussion of water treatment options).*

Q. What makes the blue-green stains on my shower wall and tub and is it a health issue?

*A. The blue green stains are probably copper from the water pipes which is released because the water is slightly acidic. The stains do not pose a health risk. (See **Table 3** for possible treatment options).*

Q. What about Fluoride? I heard that it is good for my kid's teeth; will they get it from the water?

*A. No. Fluoride is not found in the groundwater here. Pound Ridge does not have a public water supply system, we are all on private wells. Fluoride is often added to the drinking water in areas with public water supply. You should discuss fluoride with your dentist.*

Q. What are some of the things I should be looking for in my water test results and what are their negative effects if left untreated?

*A. High levels of bacteria such as coliform or E coli bacteria in the drinking water can cause diarrhea, nausea, and may cause more serious health problems in very young children or people with compromised immune systems. The source of the bacteria is often a malfunctioning septic system. Other potential contaminants to look for are lead, arsenic, MTBE, pesticides, nitrates, iron, and so forth. Some of these contaminants can cause health problems if they are not addressed. Fortunately, it is easy to test the water and to treat any contaminants before they become a problem. (See **Section II** for private well testing and **Table 1** for an overview of common contaminants).*

Q. Do any of the treatments for water problems negatively affect the septic system?

*A. No.*

Q. Can any of my actions be negatively affecting my well water?

*A. Yes. We do many things every day that can affect our well water. Fortunately, there are a few steps we all can take to protect our water. The most important step is to make sure our septic systems function the way they are supposed to. It is also important to limit the use of pesticides and herbicides around your well, be careful where you use road salt, and make sure your well is well maintained. (See **Section III** for a discussion on well maintenance and*

[www.townofpoundridge.com/conservationboard](http://www.townofpoundridge.com/conservationboard) for additional information about septic system maintenance, healthy lawns, and gardening to protect our water).

Q. How often should I test and what might be causing my water to change?

A. According to Westchester County's Water Testing Law, you must test your well when you (1) put in a new well or (2) want to sell the house. It is a good idea to test your well water regularly, however. Water quality can change over time because of construction, malfunctioning septic system, runoff from driveways and roadways, leaking underground storage tanks, and so forth. (See **Section II** for an overview of Westchester County's private well testing law and **Section V** for a list of laboratories).

Q. How do I know I need a water softener?

A. Water softeners are recommended for hard water which has a naturally high concentration of calcium and magnesium. The laboratory report will provide the range of mineral concentration. The ranges are: Soft water - 0-17 mg/L. Slightly hard water- 17-60 mg/L . Moderately hard water - 61-120 mg/L. Hard water - 120-180 mg/L. Very hard water - over 180 mg/L.

Q. What happens if I don't install a water softener?

A. If your water is hard, your shampoo will not produce suds, there may be mineral specs on your glassware, and lime scales in your boiler, but there are no known health effects.

Q. Are there health implications of using a water softener?

A. Water treated in an ion exchange system may contain elevated levels of sodium. People with hypertension and people on a salt restricted diet should be aware of that (see **Table 1**).

Q. How does the sanding/salt of the roads in winter impact my drinking water?

A. Road salts used during the winter to de-ice roads can be carried into surface water and groundwater by runoff. The road salt contributes to sodium and chloride levels in the water. Elevated chloride levels are difficult to treat , potentially toxic to aquatic life and can make the water undrinkable. Elevated sodium levels in drinking water is a health concern and can contribute to high blood pressure and be a concern to people on a sodium restricted diet.

Q. How is the water throughout the Scott's Corners Business District monitored for quality and safety?

*A. Water used by businesses and restaurants is monitored by the Department of Health.*

**Q. Is it a problem to fill pools from well water?**

*A. It is possible to fill a pool with well water but it is generally done over several days to avoid burning out the well pump and to prevent the well from running dry. Water around Pound Ridge often has a high iron content which can interact with the pool chemicals and may turn the water brown if the iron is not filtered out beforehand.*