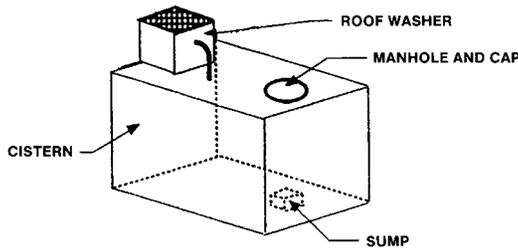


Cleaning a Cistern

- A cistern needs to be cleaned and disinfected before you use it.



- Clean out all dirt resulting from building the cistern.

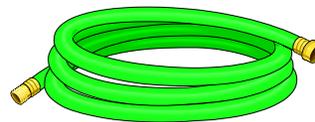


- Scrub the inside with 1/4 cup of 5% chlorine bleach mixed in 10 gallons of water.

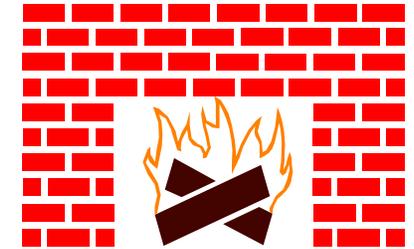
CAUTION: Make sure air can get in and out of the cistern so the workers inside are not overcome by the bleach fumes.



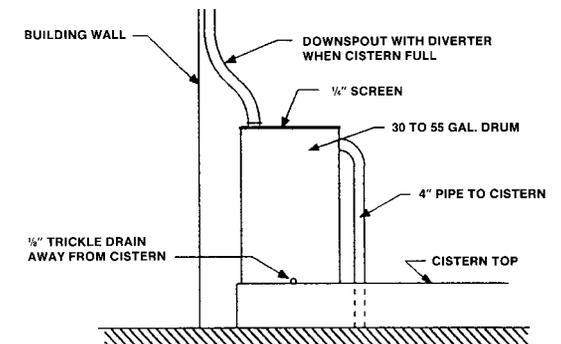
- Hose down the inside until you no longer smell bleach and then drain the cistern.



- Repeat this cleaning at least every five years. Clean the cistern more often if you heat with wood or coal, or if you have a lot of leaves on the roof.



- Clean gutters, downspouts, the roof washer and sand filter often.



Disinfecting a Cistern

If bacteria is found in your cistern water you have two choices:

1. Chlorine pump treatment

- Inserts chlorine into the water as the water enters the house.
- It takes 5 minutes of contact time to kill the bacteria. A long pipe or storage tank is needed between the point where the chlorine goes into the water and the point where the water is used.
- Chlorine may leave a taste in your water.



2. Batch treatment

- Add 1 oz. of 5% chlorine bleach for every 200 gallons of water in the cistern.
- Treat once a week.
- Thoroughly mix bleach into the water.
- Not as good as chlorine pump because new water coming in may be contaminated by sediment at the bottom of the tank. This sediment may have high bacteria levels.
- Chlorine may cause a taste that will go away in time.

Written by: Denise Hoffman, Linda Heaton, Kim Henken and Jenny Cocanougher.

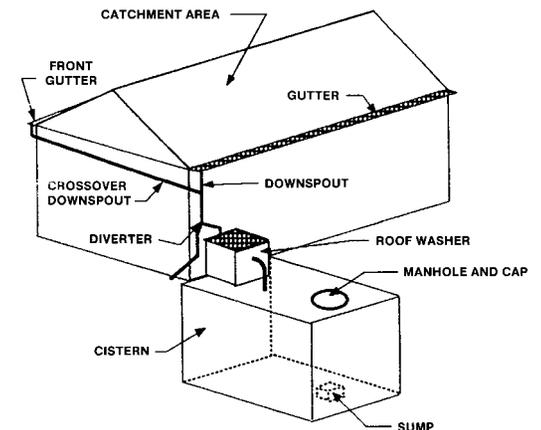
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Cleaning and Disinfecting a Cistern

Always remember that cistern water is as clean as the cistern itself and the water that goes in it.



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