

# How to get cleaner drinking water

A bunch of men with their magnificent machines make water tanks bacteria-free. Here's how they do it



**1** Clean the lid of the tank and the area outside it with a high-pressure water jet. Drain out water inside using an industrial vacuum.

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Use the same high-pressure jet of water inside the tank to clear impurities collected on walls and ceiling.



**2**

Vacuum floor to get rid of sludge.



**3**



**4**

Spray biodegradable anti-bacterial agent on all surfaces inside the tank

Sterilize with ultra violet radiation

**5**

## Why is it necessary?

Many water pipes running below the city go back to the days of the Raj. They have corroded in many places, and leaky parts often run in and out of sewers. It is essential your tank is cleaned regularly to minimise pollution. Even if you have water filters at home, filters need a minimum standard of input water to function optimally.

## What do you usually find in tanks?

Pigeon, fish, frog, lizard... and sludge.

## Any harm?

Typhoid, leptospirosis, hepatitis B...

## Which tanks can be cleaned?

Any size from 200 litre to 3.5 crore; tanks in lofts, on building terraces (domestic and corporate).

## Has anyone had it done?

The municipal corporations of Thane, Kalyan-Dombivli and Mumbai as well as many corporate houses (Cadbury, Raymond) and hospitals (Sassoon, Tata Memorial).

## What does it cost?

Rs 350 for a 10,000 litre capacity tank; Rs 475 for 20,000 litre and Rs 1200 for one lakh litre. If you are getting a tank in your loft cleaned, it would cost approx Rs 150-250. If all the flats in the building get it done, it could work out cheaper.

## So cheap?

Yes, so there's no reason not to do it. Plus there are pigeons, fishes, frogs, lizards...

## How often should it be done?

Once every three months.

## 'You cannot wait for disaster to happen'

Sunil Uplap, a mechanical engineer, started research on tank cleaning processes in 1998. It took him about a year-and-a-half to lab-test his method and finalise it. In this time, he developed an anti-bacterial sterilizing agent that is non-toxic and also the UV treatment given to the tank at the end of the whole process. He now runs Tanclean, a business that provides this tank-cleaning service.

Uplap, who has applied for a patent, says, "It is quite hard to convince people to have their tanks cleaned. Their logic is that if nothing has happened to them yet, nothing well. But you cannot wait for disaster to happen. It takes so little time, just a few hours and you're set for the next three months." Tanclean cleans 110 school tanks for free, as a community service project.

If you want your tank cleaned, call 25334059/ 25397168/ 25429291

