



Well Water

Test your private well water annually

Make sure you're serving your family safe drinking water. While most private water wells in Wisconsin provide safe drinking water, some may become contaminated with bacteria and other pollutants that are not filtered out when the water soaks into the ground.

Recommended testing

DNR recommends you test your private well at least once a year for coliform bacteria contamination and any time you notice a change in how the water looks, tastes or smells. Even if your water looks, tastes and smells good, it can contain harmful bacteria and viruses.

Bacteriological Contamination of Drinking Water Wells www.dnr.wi.gov/files/pdf/pubs/dg/dg0003.pdf

You may want to test for other contaminants, like nitrate, arsenic or agricultural chemicals.

- Tests for Drinking Water from Private Wells www.dnr.wi.gov/topic/drinkingwater/documents/pubs/testforwell.pdf
- Nitrate in Drinking Water www.dnr.wi.gov/files/pdf/pubs/dg/dg0001.pdf
- Arsenic in Drinking Water www.dnr.wi.gov/files/pdf/pubs/dg/dg0062.pdf
- Pesticides in Drinking Water www.dnr.wi.gov/topic/drinkingwater/documents/pubs/pesticides.pdf

The U.S. Geological Survey can help you understand what water quality is like in your county and contaminants you may want to test your water for.

Protecting Groundwater in Wisconsin through Comprehensive Planning wi.water.usgs.gov/gwcomp/find/

When to take action immediately

Your test results and the next steps you take differ by contaminant.

Most important contaminants

- If the lab reports the sample as bacteriologically unsafe or at risk, stop drinking your water. For more information, see Bacterial Contamination of Drinking Water Wells www.dnr.wi.gov/files/pdf/pubs/dg/dg0003.pdf
- If the lab reports elevated levels of nitrates, avoid drinking the water if you're pregnant and stop giving the water to infants younger than six months or using the water to prepare infant formula. For more information, see Nitrate in Drinking Water www.dnr.wi.gov/files/pdf/pubs/dg/dg0001.pdf
- If the lab reports elevated levels of arsenic (greater than 10 parts per billion), you may want to stop drinking the water. For more information, see Arsenic in Drinking Water. www.dnr.wi.gov/files/pdf/pubs/dg/dg0062.pdf

Other contaminants

If the lab reports elevated levels of other contaminants, follow the steps described in the brochures for that particular contaminant. For more information, see frequently asked questions about [Water Quality and Contamination in Private Wells](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/topic/Wells/waterQuality.html). www.dnr.wi.gov/topic/Wells/waterQuality.html

For additional information, or to schedule an inspection, please call Jeff @ (608) 434-0790

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