WHY SHOULD I TEST MY WELL?

Private well owners are responsible for regularly testing and maintaining their well. Unwanted substances known as contaminants can get into private well water.

Contaminants in your drinking water may lead to health problems. This makes private well testing important for better health.

Testing is often not required but is encouraged because many contaminants may not cause any change in your water’s taste, color, or smell.

WHAT SHOULD I TEST FOR?

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recommends these tests for common contaminants that can be harmful to human health:

1. **Bacteria**
   - Test once a year
   - Test any time the well is modified
   - Test any time there is a change in smell, taste, or color

2. **Nitrate**
   - Test once a year
   - Test before a pregnant person or infant drinks the water

3. **Arsenic**
   - Test when a new well is installed
   - Test yearly if arsenic was previously detected
   - Test at least once every 5 years

4. **Additional Tests**
   Additional tests may be recommended for your situation. Please see [go.wisc.edu/water-testing](http://go.wisc.edu/water-testing) for more information.
WHERE CAN I GET A TEST?

A certified local option in your area is:
Buffalo County Department of Health and Human Services
407 S. 2nd St, Alma, WI 54610
608-685-4412
https://go.wisc.edu/y5773d

Additional certified labs at:
https://go.wisc.edu/private-wells

Test kits are available:
Monday – Friday 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

How much does it cost?
Bacteria - $20
Nitrates - $20
Arsenic - $25

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE HIGH LEVELS OF CONTAMINANTS?

1 General Questions?
Contact your local health department, or the testing agency you used.

2 Learn About Health Concerns
Contact: Wisconsin Dept of Health Services
(608) 266-1120
dhsEnvHealth@wi.gov
https://go.wisc.edu/dhs-private-wells

3 Learn About Mitigation Strategies
Find more information on filtration and other household water treatment systems at:
https://go.wisc.edu/mitigation-strategies

Find a water treatment device for your needs on the National Science Foundation’s Website:
https://info.nsf.org/Certified/DWTU/

4 Schedule Well Repairs
If your tests indicated a problem, you may need to contact a well driller or pump installer.

Find a list of contacts by county here:
https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Wells/contacts.html

FOR ALL WEBSITE LINKS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:
https://go.wisc.edu/private-wells