



Did you know that your well water is actually groundwater?

Groundwater is water that occupies void spaces between soil particles or cracks in rock below the land surface. It is a local resource that originates as precipitation which infiltrates into the ground. The type of soil and bedrock that a well is drilled into often determines the pH, corrosion index or the amount of hardness or alkalinity in water. The type of soil and bedrock in a region also determines how quickly contaminants can reach groundwater.

Human activities are often responsible for elevated levels of contaminants such as nitrate and chloride.

Why Should You Test Your Well?

As one of Wisconsin's 900,000 private well owners or private well water customers, you probably use groundwater for doing a host of activities such as laundry, drinking, cooking, bathing, gardening, etc. Municipalities are required to test their water supplies regularly to ensure the water is safe to drink. Since there is no requirement to test a private well except for bacteria when your well is first drilled or the pump is changed, you are responsible for making sure your water is safe.

Most private wells provide a clean, safe supply of water. However, contaminants may pollute private wells and unfortunately you cannot see, smell or taste most of them. You should test your water on a regular basis depending on the types of land uses near your well.

To Obtain a Water Test Kit Visit:

*Washington County
Natural Resources Department
Land Resources Division
333 E. Washington St., Ste 2300
West Bend, WI 53095-2003
phone: 262.335.4800
www.washcowisco.gov*

Washington County



Well Water Testing



Center for
Watershed Science
and Education

*The Homeowners
Well Water
Test Kit includes
8 Analyses to
Determine Your
Drinking Water Quality:*

Coliform bacteria

Total hardness

Alkalinity

Conductivity

pH

Corrosivity index

Nitrate plus nitrite nitrogen

Chloride

Water Quality Tests for Your Drinking Water

The following list of water analyses and costs cover the majority of tests that would be of interest to private well owners.



Comprehensive Homeowners Package (Includes - Homeowners Package, Metals Package and DACT (Atrazine screen))

***Price(s)**

\$161.00

Homeowners Water Test Package (Includes the following Tests 1-8)

\$68.00

This package consists of the following analyses which can be run separately for the price indicated:



1. **Coliform bacteria** Test the bacteriological safety of a water supply. **\$29.00**
(Priority analysis: 48 hour turn around total cost \$58.00)



2. **Nitrate plus Nitrite-Nitrogen** The most common chemical contaminants in Wisconsin groundwater. They may also serve as an indicator of the potential presence of other contaminants, such as pesticides or trace organic chemicals from septic system effluent. **\$24.00**
(Priority analysis: 48 hour turn around total cost \$48.00)



3. **pH** Measure of relative acidity of the water. Useful in assessing the corrosivity of water to plumbing. **\$13.00**



4. **Alkalinity** Amount of bicarbonate, the major anion in water, related to pH and corrosivity. **\$14.00**



5. **Total hardness** Measure of the amount of calcium and magnesium. Important if water softening is considered. **\$14.00**

6. **Chloride** An indicator ion, that if found in elevated concentration, indicates potential contamination from septic systems, fertilizer, landfills or road salt. **\$22.00**

7. **Conductivity** Measure of total dissolved minerals in water. Change in conductivity or unusual ratio of conductivity to hardness may signal presence of contaminants. **\$13.00**

8. **Corrosivity index** A calculation to determine the tendency of water to be corrosive or scale forming. **\$38.00**

Homeowner Package plus Fluoride (requires an additional bottle) **\$88.00**

Fluoride Only **\$23.00**

Bacteria Counts (Quanti-tray method) Provides estimate of number of bacteria colony forming units. Includes E.coli result when bacteria is present. **\$40.00**

Metals Package available through the lab only. (Requires an acidified bottle - call the lab at 877.383.8378 for more information)

Individual Metals Testing is \$28.00/element: **\$60.00**

Arsenic (screen), Calcium, Copper, Iron, Lead (screen), Magnesium, Manganese, Potassium, Sodium, Sulfur (SO₄) & Zinc

Diaminochlorotriazine (DACT) Screen – Atrazine is a commonly applied pesticide used to control weeds in corn fields and has been found in Wisconsin’s groundwater. It is a good first indicator of pesticide contamination in wells and can help you to decide whether additional pesticides may also be a concern. (Requires a separate bottle - call the lab) **\$40.00**

*Reflects 2023 Prices as of 07/01/2023. Please check website for price updates - www.washcowisconsin.gov