

When Should I Test My Drinking Water?

Even if you've tested before, it may be time to test again.

- Test your drinking water **yearly** for bacteria and nitrates.
- Test for other water contaminants at least **every three years** to make sure nothing has changed. Long term-exposures to even low levels of contaminants has the potential to effect health.
- Make sure the area around the well is kept clean and kept free of animal waste and other pollution.
- When you are expecting a baby.
- When your water changes in smell, taste, or color. Drink bottled water. Call us to learn which tests to do.
- You put in new parts to the system, like a new pump or new pipes or water softener. Test for bacteria after disinfecting and flushing.
- You put in a water treatment system to fix a problem. Test the treated water each year for that problem to ensure treatment is working properly.



Madison County Health Department Division of Environmental Health Services

138 North Court Street, Building 5, Wampsville, NY 13163
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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



Not on public water?

WHAT'S IN YOUR DRINKING WATER?

FREE WATER TESTING SERVICE
for Individual Onsite Water Systems*

Madison County Health Department
Phone: 315-366-2526
Email: health@madisoncounty.ny.gov
Web: healthymadisoncounty.org

*Eligibility requirements apply.

Primary funding provided through a cooperative agreement CDC-RFA-15-1507 between the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Madison County, NY Department of Health.

NOT ON PUBLIC WATER? When did you last test your water?

If you are not on public water and get your water from an individual onsite water supply system, unless you test regularly, you do NOT know if your water is safe to drink.



My Water Looks, Smells, and Tastes Fine.

WHY SHOULD I TEST MY DRINKING WATER?

The only way to know if your individual onsite water is safe to drink is by testing your water. Germs (bacteria and viruses) or other contaminants may be getting into your water.

Chemicals can get into your water source from nature. Storm water runoff or chemicals and other elements in the soil and rocks can dissolve in groundwater and may impact your drinking water, which could effect your health.

Germs, chemicals, and other contaminants may cause unpleasant symptoms, such as upset stomach or the runs (diarrhea). Some of the chemicals and elements that may be found in contaminated water may also increase the chance of cancer or may cause other health effects.

HOW CAN I GET MY WATER TESTED FOR FREE?

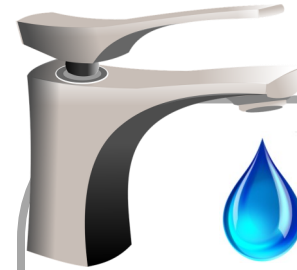
If the water to your home is served by an individual onsite water supply system (lake, spring, or well) in Madison County, then you may be eligible for our free water testing and analysis service.

Call Madison County Health Department's Water Specialist at 366-2526 to determine your eligibility.

Home water samples are collected by our water specialist.

We will provide you with a report and explain your results.

Water test results can be hard to understand. Our water specialist will explain what your results mean and provide recommendations if needed.



WHAT DO WE TEST FOR?*

Contaminant	Standard**	Potential Health Effect
Total Coliform Bacteria	Any positive result is a health concern	Indicator of presence of potentially harmful bacteria; indicates source may be subject to contamination that may cause illness (e.g. gastrointestinal illness)
Lead	0.015 mg/l	Brain, nerve and kidney damage, especially in children
Manganese	0.3 mg/l	Aesthetic quality concerns; black/brown staining of fixtures or clothes, bitter metallic taste
Sodium	No limit set	High blood pressure; water with more than 20 mg/l should not be consumed by individuals on a severely restrictive sodium diet; water with more than 270 mg/l should not be consumed by individuals on a moderately restricted sodium diet
Nitrate	10 mg/l	Infants: lack of oxygen to the body's cells and tissues ("blue baby syndrome")
Nitrite	1 mg/l	Infants: lack of oxygen to the body's cells and tissues ("blue baby syndrome")
Iron	0.3 mg/l	Aesthetic quality concerns; rusty color and staining of fixtures or clothes
Arsenic	0.01 mg/l	Darkening of skin, appearance of small corns or warts on body, increased risk for certain cancers

Water Characteristic	Standard**
pH	pH 6.5-8.5
Alkalinity	100 mg/l
Turbidity	5 NTU
Hardness	150 mg/l

***Contaminants tested for may vary depending on contaminate sources in an area and other local sampling data available.**

****Results will be compared to the proposed New York State Water Quality Standards for Individual Onsite Water Supply Systems**

mg/l means milligrams per liter (parts per million)
NTU means Nephelometric Turbidity Units