FVHD

# Farmington Valley Health District

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Avon • Barkhamsted • Canton • Colebrook • East Granby • Farmington • Granby • Hartland • New Hartford • Simsbury

## Private Well Testing Recommendations

FVHD along with the CT DPH recommends homeowners with private wells test their water regularly to ensure that it is safe to drink.

The best time of the year to test your water is after a spring or summer heavy rain period and it is always wise to test when purchasing a new home or whenever you notice a change in taste, color, odor or sediments in your water.

The table below reflects the most updated recommendations along with frequency for testing of private wells.

**Table 1. Recommended Tests for All Private Wells**

| Type of Test | When? | Why? |
|---|---|---|
| Basic Indicators (Potability)<br>See Table 2 below | **Every Year**<br>Also test after repair or replacement of your well, pump or water pipes. *If 5 years of results show no problems, test once every 5 years.* | Provides a general indication of water quality. Can provide clues that additional tests are needed. Required for all new wells. |
| Lead | **At Least Once**<br>Also test when planning a pregnancy or if you have a child under 6 years old. *If your water is corrosive (pH less than 6.0), test every 3-5 years.* | Lead can leach from plumbing (pipes and faucets). Lead pipes may be in homes built before 1930. Lead-based solder may be in homes built before 1988. Brass is used in new plumbing and fixtures. All brass contains small amounts of lead. Corrosive water leaches more lead.<br>Young children are more susceptible to harmful effects from lead exposure. |
| Arsenic, Uranium, Radon | **At Least Once**<br>Ideally, repeat test every 5 years | Arsenic, uranium and radon are naturally occurring in some groundwater in CT. Private wells with high levels have been found sporadically around CT. Levels can fluctuate over time. |
| Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) | **At Least Once** | Gasoline, oil, solvents or industrial chemicals spilled or leaked on the ground could get into your well water. |
| Fluoride | **Every 5 years when a child under 12 is present** | Fluoride can occur naturally in wells throughout CT. A child's permanent teeth can become discolored from excess fluoride. Too little fluoride can increase risk of tooth decay. Your child's dentist will likely ask you about the fluoride level in your well water. |

| Table 2. Basic Indicators Test | |
|---|---|
| **Parameter** | **Acceptable Limit** |
| Total Coliform Bacteria | None Present |
| Nitrate-Nitrogen | 10 mg/L |
| Nitrite-Nitrogen | 1 mg/L |
| pH | 6.4 - 8.5 Standard Units |
| Odor | Less than 2 |
| Chloride | 250 mg/L (milligrams per liter) |
| Hardness | 150 mg/L |
| Apparent Color | Less than 15 Standard Units |
| Sulfate | 250 mg/L |
| Turbidity | Less than 5 Standard Units |
| Iron | 0.3 mg/L |
| Manganese | 0.05 mg/L (taste/odor concern)<br>0.5 mg/L (health concern) |

You can have your water tested at any CT certified water testing lab. FVHD can provide a list.

If you currently have a water treatment system, you should periodically test for specific contaminants the system is designed to treat in order to determine if the water treatment is effective. It is also wise to periodically test the water prior to treatment to get an accurate understanding of your untreated well water.

Here are some simple, helpful things you can do to protect your drinking water well.
Know where your well is and if your well is below the ground, extend the casing above the ground and install a watertight well cap.

- Inspect and maintain your septic system.
- Keep livestock and pet waste away from well.
- Do not mix or use pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, fuels, or other hazardous materials near well.
- Do not allow waste oils or gasoline to get into soil. Make sure home heating tanks are above the ground or in the basement.

If you have questions regarding your water quality, please give us a call at 860-352-2333.