

Arsenic in Private Well Water

Arsenic is a naturally occurring element found in Wisconsin's groundwater.

Exposure to high levels of arsenic can increase the risk of certain types of cancer, affect the skin and nails, damage the nervous system, and may impact learning and development in children.

Test your well for arsenic regularly.



Test at least once every five years.*



Test once a year if arsenic was present in previous tests or you live in Outagamie, Winnebago, or Brown counties.*



Test right away if your water level changes or you notice a difference in your water's color, taste, or smell.



Test using a [Wisconsin certified lab](#).*

Take action if the arsenic level is equal to or greater than 10 micrograms per liter (µg/L).



Collect a second sample to verify the results.

Take additional actions if arsenic is still high.



Use a different source of water for drinking, making baby formula, and making foods that take up a lot of water (like oatmeal, rice and jello).

Options for different water include:



Bottled water



Water from a well without issues



Water from a public system



The water can still be used for bathing, brushing teeth, and washing dishes.



Find a long-term solution. This may be installing a certified treatment device or drilling a new well.*

* = Additional information is available in the *Resource Guide* (next page).



★ Resource Guide ★



Households with pregnant people and young children may be eligible for **free testing** through their local health department. Find contact information for your health department at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/lh-depts/counties/index.htm.



Arsenic has been found in higher levels in groundwater in the **Outagamie, Winnebago and Brown counties**. Learn more at dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Groundwater/GCC/researchHighlights.html#arsenic



When testing, you should use a **lab** certified by the DNR. You can find a list of certified labs at dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/labCert/certified-lab-lists.



The DNR provides **grants** to address water quality issues in private well. Learn about eligibility and covered expenses at dnr.wisconsin.gov/aid/WellCompensation.html.



Our *Water Treatment Devices for Private Well Contaminants* guide has information on certified **treatment devices** for arsenic: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p03494.pdf.



You should also test for bacteria and nitrate regularly.

You can find information on these and other substances to consider testing for at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/water/private.htm.

You can find all this information and more at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/chemical/arsenic.htm.

Questions? Concerns?

Contact us at

DHSEnvHealth@wi.gov

or 608-266-1120.