

# Why should I test my well water?



## How often should I test my well water?

**Private well water should be tested at least once a year.** However, additional testing is recommended if:

- There has been a significant and sudden change in smell, taste, or color of your water.
- You have a shallow well.
- You have had recent repair, damage, or flooding near your well.
- You are buying a new home.
- You are expecting a baby.
- A household member is immunocompromised.

If tests indicate any problems with your well water, take action to address the issue and retest your well when finished. Contact your local laboratory or health department to learn more about remediation measures you can take.

## The importance of well water testing

**Well water comes from water sources beneath the earth's surface known as groundwater.** Because contaminants on the surface can seep down and pollute the groundwater, it's important for well owners to have their water tested by a certified laboratory **at least annually.** Common pollutants, such as bacteria and chemicals, in addition to some naturally occurring substances in rocks and soil, can significantly affect drinking water quality and safety.

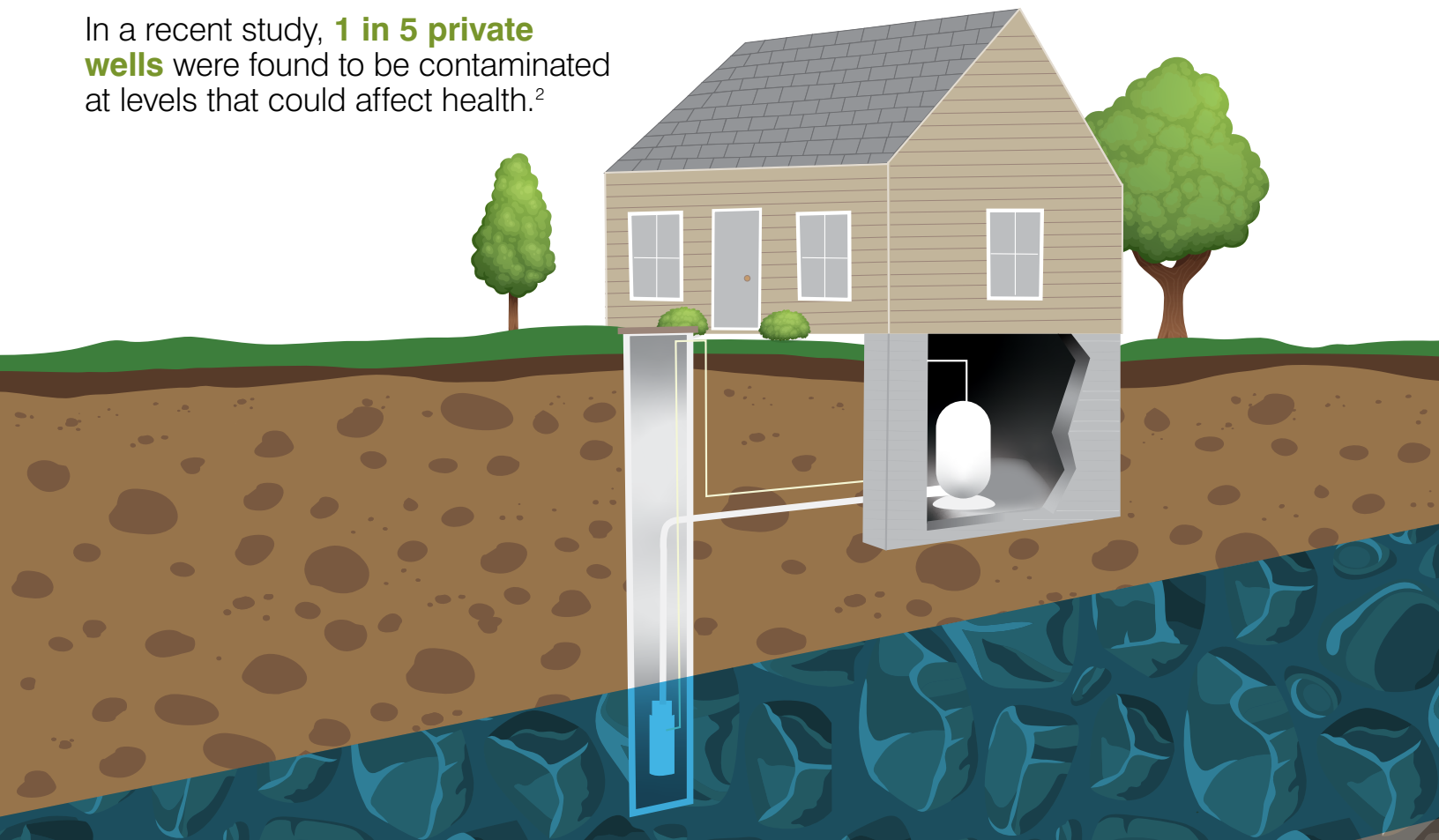
**Nearly 44 million Americans rely on wells for their primary water source.<sup>1</sup>** Regular testing is important not only to ensure water quality and proper maintenance of your treatment system, but also to help you track any changes to your water quality over time.

## Trust the industry leader

Your laboratory uses IDEXX Water tests to detect bacteria such as *E. coli*, total coliforms, enterococci, *Pseudomonas* and *Legionella*. IDEXX Water is the global industry leader in water microbiology testing and provides a full line of easy-to-use, rapid, and accurate water tests that ensure water quality and safeguard public health in communities worldwide.

The Colilert® Test and other IDEXX tests are approved by the U.S. EPA and included in *Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater*. IDEXX test kits are manufactured in Westbrook, Maine, and are used in over 120 countries.

In a recent study, **1 in 5 private wells** were found to be contaminated at levels that could affect health.<sup>2</sup>



## What should I test for?

Harmful bacteria and contaminants are often undetectable by sight or smell alone. The only way to be sure your water is safe to drink is to have it tested. Contact your local laboratory or health department to understand recommended test options, which may include the following:

### Microbiological

Coliform and *E. coli* bacteria, which indicate the presence of fecal contamination in the groundwater supply. Certain types of bacteria can cause acute gastrointestinal illness.

### Chemical

Naturally occurring and man-made chemicals, such as arsenic and volatile organic compounds (VOCs), can cause potential long-term health issues.

### General physical properties

General physical parameters, such as total dissolved solids and pH, can affect taste and odor of your water and, in some cases, can cause damage to your pipes.

### References

1. Ayotte JD, Medalie L, Qi SL, Backer LC, Nolan BT. Estimating the high-arsenic domestic-well population in the conterminous United States. *Environ Sci Technol*. 2017;51(21):12443-12454. doi: 10.1021/acs.est.7b02881
2. DeSimone LA, Hamilton PA, Gilliom RJ. *The Quality of Our Nation's Waters: Quality of Water from Domestic Wells in Principal Aquifers of the United States, 1991-2004: Overview of Major Findings*. Reston, VA: US Geological Survey, US Dept of the Interior; 2009:17. Circular 1332.

© 2019 IDEXX Laboratories, Inc. All rights reserved. • 09-2209752-00 All ®/TM marks are owned by IDEXX Laboratories, Inc. or its affiliates in the United States and/or other countries. The IDEXX Privacy Policy is available at [idexx.com](http://idexx.com).

**IDEXX**

ISO 9001 CERTIFIED  
ISO 14001 CERTIFIED

**IDEXX Laboratories, Inc.**  
One IDEXX Drive  
Westbrook, Maine 04092  
United States