



CLEAN WATER INFORMATION

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this pamphlet is gathered from publicly available sources and is provided as a public service. It is general, and therefore should not substitute for any specific water quality issues you are experiencing based on your specific circumstances.



Private Well Water Testing

Testing your private well water provides you with information on the quality of your drinking water. Testing is the best way to ensure that your drinking water supply is safe from harmful chemicals. In addition, water testing can determine whether nuisance impurities, such as iron and manganese are present and at what levels.

Private well owners are responsible for the quality of their private well water and are generally not required by law to test their water. Testing is a good idea even if you do not suspect a problem because it is the only way to be sure your water is safe to drink.

Test your well water:

● On a routine basis

See table 1 for a testing outline

● When buying a house

Water tests done during home purchases are usually required by the bank providing the mortgage and do not necessarily cover all contaminants

● Water treatment equipment

If you have water treatment equipment in your home to be sure it is working properly

● Change in water quality

When you notice a change to your water quality, or, if you suspect your well has been contaminated

Private Well Water Testing (cont.)

How Do I Get My Water Tested?

You can have your water tested at any [state certified laboratory](#) to test drinking water. Make sure the private lab is certified to test drinking water for the contaminants you are requesting. Always keep a record of all your water test results for reference.

What to Test for and How Frequently to Test?

Even if you do not suspect any well water problems, it is important to test your water to ensure that it is safe to drink. Table 1 lists the tests we recommend for all private wells even if you do not notice any problems with your water.

Private Well Water Testing: Table 1

Table 1. Recommended Tests for All Private Wells		
Test(s)	When?	Why?
Basic Indicators (see Table 2 below)	Every Year Also any time there is repair work to the well, pump or water pipes, or if your well head was flooded.	Provides a general indication of water quality. Required for all new wells. Some basic indicators above their acceptable limit are associated with health concerns.
Lead (2 samples; first draw & flushed samples should be collected when testing for lead)	At Least Once Also when planning a pregnancy or have a child under the age of 6 in the home; or, if your water is considered corrosive, test every 3-5 years.	Lead can leach from your home's plumbing (pipes, faucets, valves, etc.) system. Corrosive water leaches lead more readily. Lead above the acceptable limit is associated with health concerns. Young children are especially susceptible to harmful effects from lead exposure.
Arsenic, Uranium, Radon	At Least Once Ideally, repeat test every 5 years	Arsenic, uranium and radon are naturally occurring in groundwater in some areas of CT and are associated with health concerns above their acceptable limit. Private wells with high levels have been found sporadically around CT, and levels may fluctuate.
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)	At Least Once More often if a problem is identified or suspected	Gasoline, oil, solvents or industrial chemicals spilled or leaked on the ground could get into your well water. VOCs above their acceptable limit are associated with health concerns.
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 may advise you about the fluoride level in your well water.

Source: [CT DPH Private Well Testing](#); Updated September 2022

Private Well Water Testing: Table 2

Table 2. Basic Indicators Test		
Parameter	Applicable Drinking Water Standard*	Drinking Water Standards
Total Coliform Bacteria	None Present	<p style="text-align: center;">CT DPH Action Levels</p> <p style="text-align: center;">US EPA Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">US EPA Secondary MCLs (SMCLs)</p> <p>*Drinking water standards may be based on aesthetics or on associated health risk. If your water exceeds a drinking water standard, contact your Local Health Department or the CT DPH, Private Well Program for assistance. For more information on drinking water standards refer to the links above.</p>
Nitrate	10 milligrams/liter (mg/L)	
Nitrite	1 mg/L	
Sodium	100 mg/L	
Chloride	250 mg/L	
Iron	0.3 mg/L	
Manganese	0.05 mg/L (Based on Aesthetics)	
	0.3 mg/L (Based on Health Concerns)	
Hardness	Range: 0-60= Soft; 61-120= Mod Hard; 121-180= Hard; >181= Very Hard	
Turbidity	Less than 5 standard units (SU)	
pH	6.5 - 8.5 SU	
Sulfate	250 mg/L	
Apparent Color	Less than 15 SU	
Odor	Less than 2	

Source: [CT DPH Private Well Testing](#); Updated September 2022

PFAS

In April 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized the first-ever national drinking water standards for several PFAS in drinking water. If you are concerned about PFAS in your drinking water, you may consider installing a home filter. A home filter can be an effective way to reduce PFAS levels, and there are a variety of types of filters available at many different price points.

What are PFAS:

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a family of thousands of human-made chemicals with many useful properties including the ability to repel water, prevent staining and increase heat resistance. PFAS have many industrial and consumer uses including the coating of fabrics, carpets, electrical wire, and non-stick cookware, in food packaging (e.g., microwave popcorn bags and fast-food wrappers), as a mist suppressant in metal plating, and in firefighting foam used by firefighters to put out petroleum fires. (Home fire extinguishers do not typically contain PFAS.) Visit [CT DPH](#) to learn more about PFAS.

Decide if a Filter is Right for You:

Many public water systems already have test results for PFAS available. First, contact your local water provider to find out which PFAS, if any, are in your drinking water. For public water systems, information can be found here: <https://www.aquarionwater.com/water-quality/water-quality-reports/ct-water-quality-reports>. It is recommended that all private well owners test their well water quality on an annual basis. It may be a good idea to add a PFAS test to your annual testing if you are concerned about the quality of water in your well.

PFAS testing can be performed by a certified lab: <https://portal.ct.gov/dph/environmental-health/environmental-laboratory-certification/environmental-laboratory-certification>. If PFAS have not been measured in your water, or if PFAS have been measured but are below federal limits, a filter may not be useful to you.

PFAS (cont.)

Types of Filters:

Many types of water filters are currently available, but it is important to ensure that the filter you choose to purchase is appropriate to remediate PFAS. As of April 2024, filter certifications focus on removing the chemicals PFOA and PFOS, which are two specific types of PFAS. Many varieties of filters exist, including pitcher filters, faucet filters, and whole-home filters, and these filters can range in price. When calculating filter cost, it is important to take into account any maintenance and disposal costs that may be associated with the particular filter of your choosing.

Several different kinds of filters are effective at reducing PFAS:

- Charcoal (Granular Activated Carbon or GAC): These filters use carbon to trap chemicals as water passes through them
- Reverse Osmosis: Reverse osmosis is a process that forces water through an extremely thin barrier that separates chemicals from the water
- Ion Exchange Resins: Resins are tiny beads that act like powerful magnets that attract and hold the contaminated materials from passing through the water system

Where You Can Find Information on Recommended Filters:

Visit <https://info.nsf.org/Certified/dwtu/> to learn more about certified filters. Please review the certification information before purchasing to ensure your model has been certified for PFAS reduction.



Information from the EPA

Check for Certification:

Certification by an independent entity is an assurance that the filter works as the manufacturer says it does. To find a certified filter, look on the product packaging for a certification by an accredited body. There are currently five American National Standards Institute (ANSI)-accredited third-party certification bodies that evaluate drinking water filters for PFAS reduction capabilities. Each has a registered trademark that is used on certified products.

To make sure the filter you select is certified:

- First, check the product packaging for certification to “NSF/ANSI 53” or NSF/ANSI 58” for PFAS reduction.
- If in doubt, check the certification body’s product directory website for testing information or to see if the product has been certified to treat PFAS (such as PFOA and PFOS) found in drinking water. The certification body’s mark will typically be on the packaging. See the table below for links to a product directory for each certification body.
- If still in doubt, you can contact the certification body directly from their websites.

A filter may list claims for PFAS reduction on its outer packaging, in a performance data sheet within the package, or on the manufacturer’s website. It’s important to note that the current certification standards for PFAS filters (as of April 2024) do not yet indicate that a filter will remove PFAS down to the levels EPA has now set for a drinking water standard. EPA is working with standard-setting bodies to update their filter certifications to match EPA’s new requirements. In the meantime, remember that reducing levels of PFAS in your water is an effective way to limit your exposure.

Maintenance is Critical Filters are only effective if they are maintained according to the manufacturer’s instructions. Not replacing a filter by the manufacturer’s recommend schedule can increase your risk of exposure to PFAS.

For More Information on Certified Filters:

- <https://www.csagroup.org/testing-certification/product-listing/>
- <https://pld.iapmo.org/>
- <https://info.nsf.org/Certified/DWTU/>
- <https://productiq.ulprospector.com/en>
- <https://find.wqa.org/find-products#/>

For more information on the science behind different types of PFAS filters, visit EPA’s website [here](#).