



# WATER QUALITY & YOUR HEALTH

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# Why does water quality matter?

**Contaminants in drinking water can make you sick**

- 1) Bacteria – some cause GI illness, possibly severe
- 2) Nitrate – Blue baby syndrome, birth defects, thyroid disease, kidney cancer
- 3) Arsenic – kidney cancer and others, effects on the nervous and circulatory systems.

# Testing

**Private well testing varies depending on the contaminant**

- 1) Bacteria – test annually, result is either present or absent
- 2) Nitrate – test annually, 10 mg/L is too high, expect < 2 mg/L
- 3) Arsenic – test every 5 years, 10 ug/L is too high, expect < 1 ug/L

# Testing

## Options for testing

- 1) WI State Lab of Hygiene- limited fee exempt  
([www.slh.wisc.edu/environmental/water/](http://www.slh.wisc.edu/environmental/water/))
- 2) Private labs  
([dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/LabCert/PrivateWellTesting](http://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/LabCert/PrivateWellTesting))

# Treatment

**Depends on the problem you have**

Disinfection is the primary solution for Coliform

- Correct problems with the well or system first
- Shocking your well is the most common treatment
- More is not better
- Consider hiring a professional

# Treatment



This table lists the devices certified to remove the contaminants commonly found in Wisconsin private wells.

	 Carbon filtration	 Reverse osmosis	 Water softener
Arsenic		✓	
Atrazine	✓		
Copper		✓	
Fluoride		✓	
Lead	✓	✓	
Manganese			✓
Nitrate		✓	
Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)	✓	✓	
Trichloroethylene (TCE)	✓		
To reduce levels, look for products with:	NSF/ANSI 53 certification	NSF/ANSI 58 certification	NSF/ANSI 44 certification

Filtration can be targeted to save you money.

- Point of Use (POU)
  - Under sink system
  - Refrigerator
  - Nitrate
- Point of Entry (POE)
  - Filter all water entering the house
  - Arsenic

# Replacement

**Most expensive up front, no guarantee to get good quality water.**

- 1) Good option if you have an old or shallow well
- 2) Need enough space to meet set back requirements
- 3) Long term solution if you have access to clean water

# Alternate source of water

**Most expensive long term**

- 1) Look for NSF or ANSI label on bottled water
- 2) May be necessary short term



*Healthy people. Healthy places.*

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