

Well Water Safety Checklist

Keep your family's drinking water safe

A free printable guide from Find a Well Lab — <https://findawelllab.com>

Private wells are not covered by the federal Safe Drinking Water Act the way city water is. That means **you** are in charge of testing. Use this checklist once a year—and any time something changes at home.

1. Schedule your yearly lab test

CDC and EPA recommend testing private well water **at least once every year** for total coliform bacteria, nitrates, total dissolved solids (TDS), and pH. Use a **state-certified** lab—find one at findawelllab.com.

Got your results? See what they mean: <https://findawelllab.com/what-your-results-mean/>

2–15. The rest of your annual checklist

2. Know your local risks (arsenic, lead, radon, pesticides, PFAS, manganese).
3. Watch for taste, smell, or color changes — test right away.
4. Retest after floods or heavy storms.
5. Retest after well or pump work.
6. Test before a new baby or pregnancy (nitrates matter).
7. Check farms, septic systems, and neighbors.
8. Inspect the wellhead and sanitary cap.
9. Note the well's age and construction.
10. Don't ignore repeated stomach bugs — test for coliform / E. coli.
11. Think about plumbing and lead (first-draw sample).
12. Keep a simple water diary.
13. Have a backup drinking plan for infants and outages.
14. Share results with caregivers.
15. Retest after treatment is installed.

Quick “test now” red flags

Floodwater over or near the well · Sudden taste/odor/color change · New baby or pregnancy · Nearby farm spill, septic backup, or fuel smell · Well/pump repair just completed

Next step

Find a certified lab: <https://findawelllab.com>

Got your results? See what they mean: <https://findawelllab.com/what-your-results-mean/>

Family guides: <https://findawelllab.com/guides/>

Sources (guidance only)

CDC — Well Testing · U.S. EPA — Private Wells · USGS groundwater summaries

Educational only — not medical or legal advice. If someone is sick, contact a clinician. Interpret lab results with a certified lab or public-health professional.

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