



Elkhart County Health Department

Environmental Health Services

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WATER TESTING REQUIREMENTS FOR PRIVATE WATER WELLS

Background

In order to protect the health of Elkhart County residents, County Ordinance 2017-24 requires that the water quality be tested any time a new well is installed.

This testing is very important to the health of residents because the process of drilling a well frequently introduces harmful bacteria into a well. Also, there are areas within the county that have high levels of arsenic and nitrates which can be very hazardous to health.

The well drilling company must disinfect your private water well with chlorine or by another acceptable method after they finish drilling the well. If the disinfection does not kill the bacteria, the private water well will need to be disinfected again until a satisfactory sample is obtained.

Water Testing Requirements

The Health Officer shall grant final approval of a potable private water well only if the owner submits to the Health Officer a satisfactory report of an analysis. It shall be the responsibility of the property owner to provide for the collection and testing of all the water well samples. The owner of the private water well or the owner's designee may collect the sample or samples to be analyzed. The sample or samples shall be collected from a permanent fixture inside the building or dwelling or a sampling tap installed near the pressure tank, but only after it appears that all chlorine residual has dissipated from the water supply.

The water laboratory (or water laboratories) shall test for, and report on, the presence or absence of

1. total coliform bacteria,
2. E. coli,
3. nitrate concentrations measured as nitrogen,
4. arsenic, and
5. chlorine residual.

The Health Officer may order other tests deemed reasonable and necessary on a case by case basis to the extent that such test protect against a health risk or concern.

If the laboratory report or reports indicate the presence of:

1. chlorine, total coliform bacteria, or E. coli, at any level, or
2. a nitrate level of 10 milligrams per liter (parts per million (ppm)) or greater, or
3. an arsenic level of 10 micrograms per liter (parts per billion (ppb)) or greater,

the Health Officer shall not approve the use of the potable private water well until a satisfactory report or reports is obtained and submitted to the Health Officer.

All water analysis sample results shall be provided to the Health Officer within ten days of the completion of the analysis.

If there is a problem with your water quality, the Health Department will contact you to help you resolve the problem.

Improving the Lives, Health and Environment of our Community



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