



Monroe County Health Department

Serving the Community since 1921

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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In-House Bacteria Water Testing Now Available

Are you jotting down last minute New Year's Resolutions? Make one to test your private well water! Testing your well water annually helps protect your overall health, and Monroe County Health Department is making your annual testing more convenient by offering in-house water testing for bacteria.

Your well should be tested for bacteria and nitrates every year. Bacteria in drinking water can be a serious health risk because harmful germs could also be in the water. At high enough levels, bacteria may cause nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Bacteria can get into private wells through surface contamination, septic systems, livestock waste, fertilization, or if your well is damaged, abandoned, improperly filled or installed incorrectly.

Nitrates should be avoided by everyone, but are most dangerous to people who are pregnant and infants. High levels of nitrates can cause birth defects as well as "blue baby syndrome," which occurs when a baby's skin turns blue because of the body's inability to carry oxygen. Common sources of nitrate include nitrogen fertilizers, manure, septic systems and sewage treatment practices. It can easily be carried into the groundwater by rainwater and melting snow.

Test your water by picking up a test kit! The cost for a bacteria and nitrate test is \$60. Bacteria test results will be received in 1-2 business days and nitrate test results will be received in 3-6 weeks. If your results are unsafe, Health Department staff are here to assist with next steps.

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Healthy People, Healthy Monroe County

