

## Your Responsibility

If the drinking water for your child care comes from a private well, you have an important responsibility to make sure that the well water is clean and healthy. You need to have the water tested to know what is in it.



## What to Test for

**Coliform bacteria**—used as an indicator to determine if surface contamination (e.g. soil, sewage, etc.) has entered the water system.

**Nitrate**—comes from fertilizers, animal waste, sewage, etc. Nitrate can cause a very serious form of anemia in infants.

**Arsenic**—a mineral that is naturally occurring in the environment. Health effects may range from gastrointestinal disorders to effects on the nervous system and increases in the risk of certain cancers.

## Record Keeping

Keep records of your water tests for at least 5 years.



The Snohomish Health District recommends the following precautions:

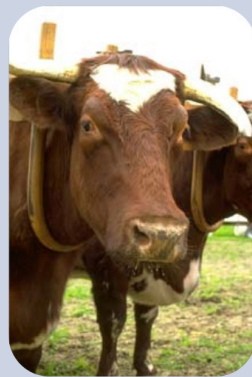
### Well Construction

Any repairs or modifications should be performed by a qualified individual, such as a licensed well contractor. The well needs an adequate seal to be protected. For questions about well construction, contact the Water Wastewater Program at Snohomish Health District at 425.339.5250.

### Source Protection

Protect the area within a 100-foot radius of your well. In this area:

- avoid keeping compost or manure piles
- avoid storage or application of chemicals, pesticides, or herbicides
- avoid parking motor vehicles



**Remember:**  
*What falls on the ground in this area could end up in your drinking water.*

Also make sure that your sewage disposal is well maintained. Sewage from a failing septic system can get into your well water.



Call the Communicable Disease Outreach Program for additional information about testing your water or how to interpret test results.

**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
ALWAYS WORKING FOR A SAFER AND  
HEALTHIER SNOHOMISH COUNTY

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## Safe Well Water

Family Home Child Care  
Individual Wells or Small Public  
Water Systems



## Minimum Recommended Testing Schedule

### Dug Wells:

- Bacteriological
  - test every 3 months
- Nitrate
  - test every 3 years
- Arsenic
  - test every 3 years



### Drilled Wells

- Bacteriological
  - test every year
- Nitrate
  - test every 3 years
- Arsenic
  - test every 3 years



To ensure accurate results, water samples must be collected correctly. Call the Communicable Disease Outreach Program at 425.339.5278 if you have questions, or would like further information about:

- Who can test your water
- How to properly collect a sample
- How to interpret test results
- What to do about measurable levels of nitrate or arsenic
- How to treat contaminated water

## Interpreting Test Results

### Bacteriological

Refer to the laboratory analysis slip.

Washington State Department of Health Water Bacteriological Analysis			
DOH#	Parameter	Result	Units
1	Total Coliform	Unsatisfactory, Coliform Present per	100ml
3	E. Coli	Absent	Per 100ml

If the result is marked **satisfactory**, the lab found no coliform bacteria in the sample. Coliforms are a group of commonly occurring bacteria used as indicators of general water quality.

If the result is marked **unsatisfactory**, the lab found coliform or fecal coliform bacteria in the sample and the water is considered **unsafe** for drinking. Coliforms and fecal coliforms are found in the surface environment, such as soil and in human or animal waste. **The water should not be used for drinking, food preparation, or toothbrushing until corrective action has been taken and the water is retested and determined to be safe for drinking.**

Inorganic Compounds (IOC) Report					
ANALYTES	Results	Units	PQL	MDL	*MCL
Arsenic	ND	mg/L	0.001	0.00025	0.010
Nitrate-N	4.46	mg/L	0.1	0.015	10

### Arsenic

< 0.002 mg/L or ND	not detectable (ND)
0.002 to 0.01 mg/L	below MCL; continue periodic testing **
> 0.01 mg/L	above MCL; <b>do not use</b> as a drinking water source or install water treatment device
> 0.150 mg/L	<b>do not use</b> as a drinking water source

### Nitrate

< 0.05 mg/L or ND	not detectable (ND)
0.05 to 10.0 mg/L	below MCL; nitrate levels can vary so continue periodic testing **
> 10.0 mg/L	above MCL; <b>do not use</b> as a drinking water source

\* **MCL** = Maximum Contaminant Level

\*\* Snohomish Health District can help you determine an appropriate testing schedule.

## Did You Know...

Even if your last water test was satisfactory, changing conditions can affect your water quality. Regular testing can help detect problems early, and establish a record of your home's water supply quality.



These testing frequencies are based on best practice and may be different than child care licensing requirements.

Your neighbor's well test cannot tell you the quality of your water. Each well needs its own tests. Even neighboring wells can draw water from separate aquifers underground.

Some chemicals in your water may cause discoloration or staining on fixtures and laundry.



- red/rust = iron
- blue/green = copper
- grey/black = manganese

Specific water tests can help you determine the levels of these substances in your water.