Even if your water looks and smells fine, it may still contain harmful bacteria or chemicals.

**Bacteria** — Bacteria and viruses can get into well water if the well casing is damaged or if you have a dug or a shallow well.

**Chemicals** — Many wells in Maine contain harmful chemicals such as arsenic, radon, and uranium. You cannot smell or taste these chemicals. The only way to know if they are in your well water is to have your water tested.

Test your well today. It’s quick and easy.

1. Find a lab
2. Call lab and order test kit
3. Fill test kit bottles with tap water
4. Return water bottles to the lab
How do I test my well?

1. Visit wellwater.maine.gov or call 1-866-292-3474 to find a certified well water testing lab.
2. Call your lab and order a test kit.
3. Fill the bottles from your test kit with tap water, and fill out the forms included with the kit.
4. Mail the kit and forms back to the lab, or drop them off in person.

For helpful information on how to test your well water, watch "How to Test Your Well Water" at youtube.com/user/MainePublicHealth

10 minutes is all it takes to test your well water

How much does it cost to test my well water?
It depends on what lab you use and what you are testing for. Here’s an example you can use to make a plan for testing your well water. Ask the lab where you test your water for prices.

Testing Plan
1. Each year do a basic safety test.
   • For bacteria, nitrate, nitrite
   • Cost: $30-$60
2. Every 5 years do a standard water test.
   • For bacteria, nitrates and other chemicals*
   • Cost: $70-$120
3. Every 5 years test for radon.
   • Test your water and air
   • Cost: $60-$80

* A standard test should include bacteria, nitrate, nitrite, arsenic, uranium, iron, manganese, fluoride, pH, and lead.

What are the health concerns?
Well Problem → Can Cause
Bacteria .......... Diarrhea, Vomiting
Nitrate/ Nitrite .. Infant Blood Problems
Arsenic .......... Brain Damage, Cancer
Radon ............. Cancer
Uranium .......... Kidney Problems
Manganese ...... Brain / Nerve Damage
Fluoride .......... Too Little – Tooth decay is likely
                 Too Much – Stained Teeth
Lead ............... Brain Damage

Other Times to do a Standard Water Test
• If you’re expecting a baby (also do a first-draw lead test)
• Your water changes in smell, taste, or color
• After installing a water treatment system, or replacing parts of your treatment system
• After any work is done on your well
• When buying a new home

Why test for all these things?
• Chances are good that your well is drilled into rock, sand, or gravel that has arsenic, radon, or other chemicals.
• If your well is a dug or shallow well it is easier for bacteria and nitrates to get in your water.
• If your well is near a farm nitrates can get in your water.
• If your well is near a septic leach field bacteria and nitrates can get in your water.
• Your plumbing or fixtures may contain lead that can dissolve into your water.

What if I can’t afford to treat my well?
You might qualify for help to pay for treating your water. Call MaineHousing at 800-452-4668 or Maine Relay 711, or visit mainehousing.org for more information.

What if my water has a problem?
Switch to bottled water right away
Call our water experts toll-free in Maine at 866-292-3474 or 207-287-4311, to talk through your options.

Your Well. Your Health.
We can help you figure out what to test for. Call us 866-292-3474.

Your Well. Your Health.
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