



DO YOU USE A PERSONAL WATER WELL?

Maxxam can provide you a complimentary sampling kit & work with you to ensure your well water is safe to drink.

WELL WATER SHOULD BE TESTED 2-3 TIMES PER YEAR

Facts:

- Microbial (bacterial) and chemical contaminants that can be found in well water can lead to long-term health problems as per BC's Ministry of Health Files (#45)
- Many of these harmful substances can be tasteless, odorless and invisible
- Clean neighbouring wells do not indicate that your well is clean

Contaminants:

- Faulty in-ground sewage systems: the introduction of bacteria can lead to intestinal problems
- Nitrates from animal wastes and fertilizers: can interfere with the ability of blood cells to carry oxygen
- Naturally occurring metals (e.g. arsenic): can cause serious long-term health problems
- Lead and other heavy metals from pipes and soldered joints: can cause serious long-term health problems

Health Protection:

- Well water should be tested 2 - 3 times a year (as per Health Canada www.hc-sc.gc.ca)
- Testing is recommended in early spring, after dry spells or heavy rains and following long periods of non-use
- Further testing should be undertaken if there is a change in the clarity, colour, odour or taste of the well water and if there have been changes in the surrounding land use

For more info, and a **free sampling kit** for your family's well water, contact Maxxam today at:

1.800.665.8566

DWBC@maxxam.ca

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[See FAQ >](#)

DRINKING WATER TESTING FAQ



TESTING WITH MAXXAM

Maxxam is the Canadian market leader in analytical services and solutions to the energy, environmental, industrial hygiene, food and DNA industries and a member of the Bureau Veritas Group of companies – a world leader in testing, inspection and certification services. We support critical decisions made by our customers through the application of rigorous science and the knowledge and expertise of our over 2200 employees.

What is a “potability certificate”?

Potable means “safe to drink”. A potability test should include more than a basic bacteria test as other common contaminants like heavy metals can also make drinking water unsafe.

The most common items of concern to local well owners include:

- total coliform & E.coli bacteria
- metals (arsenic, boron, iron, manganese, lead, etc.)
- nitrate
- chloride (salt), fluoride

It is not uncommon to find any of these items in concentrations above the safe levels in the Drinking Water Guidelines. Water can look and taste fine but have long-term health effects from things like heavy metals. This is why labs recommend informing buyers about the well water and testing it using the “Home Safety Scan” at a minimum as it includes all of these parameters of concern.

What to expect at the lab?

The lab can provide you with the proper containers for sampling (guaranteed to be sterile and free from contaminants). There will also be a chain of custody (aka requisition) form that should be filled out completely. This is your contract with the lab, identifying what you want the water tested for, what you want your sample called on the report (generally a good idea to have the property address in the sample ID), and to whom the report should go when completed.

Samples should arrive at the lab within 24hrs and be kept cold (<8C) - if shipping by courier pack with lots of ice.

How long does the testing take?

Standard turn-around time for most tests is 5 business days, therefore, you should try to get the sample in well over a week before you actually need the report in your hands. Work can sometimes be rushed but there will be extra charges attached. Planning ahead also gives you/the sellers time to deal with any water quality issues if the test comes back showing levels that do not meet the Drinking Water Guidelines. Buyers generally expect and assume that a home comes with good drinking water, and their lender may require proof of testing before approving the mortgage.

Useful Links:

HealthLineBC’s guide on “Should I Get My Well Water Tested?”
<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/well-water-testing>

Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality- Summary Table
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/pubs/water-eau/sum_guide-res_recom/index-eng.php

Maxxam’s Resource Centre for Drinking Water Testing
<http://maxxam.ca/maxxams-resource-centre-for-drinking-water-testing>