



Recommendations for WELL WATER TESTING

The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) regulates water wells that are used as potable water supplies for permitted food service establishments, body art studios, swimming pools, and tourist accommodations in Georgia. Water quality for these businesses must meet compliance standards established under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. Private water wells in Georgia, however, are not subject to any regulatory authority. Therefore, it is the well owner's responsibility to monitor the quality and ensure the safety of their drinking water.

Well Water Testing Recommendations

W33 Test — Small Water Systems

GA - Certification for Drinking Water Providers (Small Distribution Systems)

The W-33 test is the required test profile for wells serving public facilities that are permitted by the Georgia Department of Public Health. The W-33 test is available through your local County Public Health Department or UGA County Cooperative Extension Office.

W33C Test — Private Well Owners

Georgia Department of Public Health Private Well Chemical Test

The W-33C test provides a chemical screening of well water for private well owners and includes the addition of arsenic and lead tests. It is recommended that a chemical screening be completed every 3 years for private wells. The W-33C test is available through UGA County Cooperative Extension offices.

W35 Test — Total Coliform / E. coli (Colilert®)

Coliform can enter a well through surface water run-off, damaged well components, lack of proper well-head protection, poor construction, a nearby abandoned/unsealed well, and improperly maintained septic systems. It is recommended to test private wells for coliforms annually, and it is required for small water systems permitted by DPH to test for coliforms quarterly. The W-35 test is available through your local County Public Health Department or UGA County Cooperative Extension Office.

Sources of Arsenic and Lead

Arsenic is naturally occurring in rock and soil. It can enter groundwater through erosion and has been detected at elevated levels in some South Georgia water wells. Lead usually contaminates water through plumbing fixtures and components. In Georgia, while this risk of being exposed to lead from well water is low, DPH recognizes the consequences of lead exposure and the importance of early detection. Early detection requires frequent testing.

How Can I Understand my Test Results?

The Cooperative Extension has an online interactive tool to assist well owners with understanding their water test results. The Drinking Water Interpretation and Recommendations Tool allows you to enter your test results into an online form for each contaminant. This tool allows the user to compare drinking water test results to the federal drinking water standards. It shows if there is anything to be concerned about, the potential sources of the problems (if any), probable health effects, and suggested remedial measures, such as effective filters. It also provides links to several additional sources of information.

To access the Cooperative Extension **Drinking Water Interpretation and Recommendations Tool**, visit: <http://aesl.ces.uga.edu/water/recommendations>.

For all other inquiries, including how to collect well water samples for analysis, contact your local extension office, or call **1-800-ASK-UGA1**.

Helpful Resources

UGA Cooperative Extension

<https://aesl.ces.uga.edu/>

Georgia Department of Public Health

Environmental Health Section

<https://dph.georgia.gov/well-water>

For More Information

Georgia Department of Public Health

Environmental Health Section

Chemical Hazards Program

(404) 657-6534

www.dph.georgia.gov/chemical-hazards