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If You Have a Private Well, Please Get It Tested, Says State Public Health Department

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Categories : [Healthy Living](#)

Tagged as : [Connecticut Department of Public Health](#), [Drinking Water](#), [Private Wells](#), [Private Wells 2019](#)

Date : March 14, 2019

The more than 800,000 state residents who use private wells as their main source for drinking, bathing or cooking water should have their water tested for bacteria and other contaminants, the Connecticut Department of Public Health says.

Connecticut does not require annual testing of private well water, leaving voluntary self-testing the only reliable way to find out if any [groundwater contaminants](#) have entered the well. Private wells in the northeast historically have found traces of the naturally occurring chemicals in well water.

The Town of Glastonbury recently announced it would be testing private well water in specific neighborhoods due to elevated levels of uranium being discovered in local private wells.

“Water plays an essential role in everyone’s life. Yet for nearly one in five Connecticut residents who get their water from private wells, we have no way of knowing exactly what is in their water — unless we test,”

said DPH Commissioner Dr. Raul Pino.

“Proper maintenance and annual testing of private well water systems is essential to protecting the water quality and the health of those who rely on it,” Pino said. “Testing is relatively simple and I encourage everyone in this state who uses a private well for water — find out what’s in your water. It’s good for everyone!”

Here are some easy instructions on how you can better protect your well:

This week is [National Groundwater Awareness Week](#), sponsored by the National Groundwater Association, a network of groundwater professionals nationwide whose mission is to promote public policies to enhance clean, safe groundwater and drinking water.

The year 2019 marks the 20th anniversary of the observance of National Groundwater Awareness Week. The Connecticut DPH is encouraging home owners who use a private well to perform routine safety inspections and maintenance on their water system and annual testing of their well water.

Private well owners are responsible for the quality of their private well water. Wells are required to be tested just after they are constructed, but no annual maintenance or testing is required by law.

Spring is generally a good time for an annual water well checkup before peak water use season begins. Private well owners should consider taking a few steps to [inspect their wells for structural problems](#), protect it from contamination, conserve water, and most importantly, [test the well’s water quality](#).

“Some contaminants such as arsenic and uranium have no taste, odor or color so the only way to know if these toxins are present is to have your well water tested,” DPH Epidemiologist Brian Toal advises.

“These two naturally occurring toxins can be are found in the bedrock underneath our homes. Long-term exposure to uranium can lead to kidney damage, though these health impacts are treatable and reversible. That’s why testing your water is so important — it’s the best way to find out what’s in your well.”

For more information and resources on how to test your well water visit the [DPH Private Well Program website](#) or call (860) 509-8401.