



PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
905-688-3762 or 1-800-263-7248
www.regional.niagara.on.ca

Private Water Supply Safety for Lakeshore Property Owners, Wainfleet

Why Should You Sample Your Private Water Supply?

Drinking water that has harmful bacteria can make you sick. These bacteria can give you stomach cramps and/or diarrhea, as well as other problems. Water that has these bacteria is unsafe to drink. The only way to make sure your water supply is safe to drink is to test it regularly. **Free** water bottle samples are available at the municipal offices in Wainfleet Village and Public Health Department offices, the closest being the Welland Public Health Department office at 540 King Street.

How often should you sample the water?

At least 6 times per year or more frequently if bacterial problems exist. The Public Health Department also recommends that you have your private water supply tested for nitrates if water is used to mix formula for infants or is consumed by infants. Private labs can carry out chemical water testing for the presence of nitrates. Check the Yellow Pages for a lab near you.

How to Sample Your Private Water Supply for Bacteria

Sampling Procedures:

1. Obtain a 200 ml water sample bottle from the Public Health Department office closest to you. Municipal offices also have supply.
2. Remove aerators and other attachments from your tap.
3. Disinfect around the inside of the nozzle with a flame from a match or lighter. If nozzle is plastic, swab with chlorine bleach.
4. Let water run for 5 minutes before taking the water sample.
Do not touch the bottle lip and do not rinse out the bottle.
5. Fill bottle to the "fill line" directly from the tap without changing the flow of water.
6. Replace cap tightly.
7. Complete the "Bacterial Analysis of Water" form, which is attached to water bottle.

Returning Your Sample:

1. Samples should be refrigerated after collection.
2. You should collect your sample on the day you deliver it to the Public Health Department.
3. Sample and all forms must be submitted within 24 hours of collection.
4. Routine samples should be submitted from Monday to Thursday.

Water Quality Tests

Total Coliforms

- This group of bacteria is always present in animal wastes and sewage, but is also found in soil and on vegetation.
- The presence of these bacteria in your wells is usually the result of soil run-off or septic tank seepage.

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Escherichia Coli (E. Coli)

- These bacteria are only found in the intestines of people and animals.
- The presence of E.Coli bacteria in your well is usually the result of recent sewage contamination from a nearby source.
- These bacteria are the ones that may cause disease.

Nitrates

- Nitrates are the end result of a chemical reaction, they are not bacteria.
- The presence of nitrates in your well water is usually the result of seepage from septic tanks or farming activities like fertilizing.
- Infants less than six months old can become sick from drinking formula mixed with water high in nitrates. The nitrates in the formula reduce the amount of oxygen carried by the blood and can cause "blue-baby syndrome" (methaemoglobinemia).

Bacterial Drinking Water Results

Total Coliforms	E.Coli	What It Means
0	0	Safe for drinking. Maintain regular testing.
1-5	0	One sample with this result is unsatisfactory. Resample.
0-5	0	Satisfactory if this range is achieved for 3 samples taken 1-3 weeks apart.
6 to >80	0	Unsafe for drinking unless boiled or treated.
1 to >80	1 to >60	Unsafe for drinking unless boiled or treated.
EST		Unsafe for drinking unless boiled or treated.
O/G		Unsafe for drinking unless boiled or treated.

If your results are unsatisfactory:

- Install an approved C.S.A. (Canadian Standards Association) water treatment device
- Resample
- Contact a Public Health Inspector for advice to ensure a safe drinking water supply

Do not drink the water until you receive satisfactory sample results.

Note: Dug wells and surface water supply systems (ie: lake water) require approved treatment devices to ensure a safe water supply.

For more information, contact the Inspection Division at the Welland Public Health Department office at 905-735-5697 or the St. Catharines office at 905-688-3762 or 1-800-263-7248. Please visit the Public Health Department web pages at www.regional.niagara.on.ca for more information.

Adapted from the original produced by The Waterloo Regional Health Unit and the County of Lambton Community Health Services Department.

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