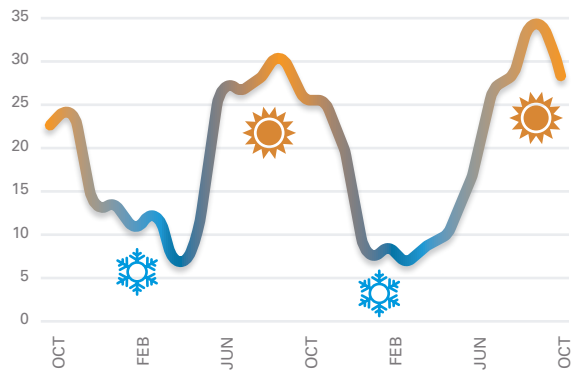


When should you test your water?

The simple answer is all the time, as you never know when water quality might change. Public health agencies recommend that private wells be tested for total coliform bacteria at least once a year. Testing is best performed during the warmer months as this is when your water has the highest probability of being impacted by external influences.

Total Coliforms Detections Across Seasons



You should also have your water tested if:

- Your water's color, taste, or odor has changed.
- Someone in your family has or develops a weak immune system from illness, medical treatment, or age.
- Your family is growing.
- Someone has an unexplained gastrointestinal illness after drinking your tap water.
- You've moved into a new home.

Test your water for peace of mind

Frequent testing for total coliforms is the best way to determine if your water is being influenced by an external source. Always refer to your local health and environmental authorities for guidance and education on good private well stewardship.

Should you have any questions about microbial testing or your next steps, please contact us.

Well Water Testing

Your Questions Answered



Why should you test your water?

If your water is supplied by a municipality, large or small, your water supply is tested routinely, at the source. But what if you are on a private water supply, like a well, lake, or even a rainwater tank? In these cases, no one is testing your water unless you are.

Because biological contaminants can't be seen, smelled, or tasted, it's important to proactively test your water quality instead of waiting until someone gets sick. Even if the presence of a particular contaminant is readily apparent, such as the red-colored stains that iron leaves on fixtures, testing quantifies the problem, making the best water treatment choice easier.

The quality of your water changes over time. There are many possible sources of contamination, including:



Heavy rain or flooding



Leaking septic systems



Snowmelt



Land use

What are we testing for?

The water test screens for total coliform bacteria, including fecal coliforms and *E. coli*. These simple bacteria are found in soil, water, and the waste of warm-blooded animals. While not necessarily harmful, these bacteria are considered indicator organisms and are used to indicate potential risk of contamination by pathogens or an external influence on the water source.

How does the test work?

Using a simple method called presence-absence, the test will indicate whether total coliforms are present in the water, but it doesn't provide a quantifiable concentration (i.e., colony forming units [CFU] per 100 mL). The initial drawn sample will be a dark purple color. The sample is incubated at 25 to 30°C for 48 hours. If the water turns yellow during the incubation period, the test is positive for total coliform bacteria.

Is the test accurate?

Based on an accepted methodology¹ for a presumptive test, the test can detect total coliform down to 1 CFU per 100 mL of water, which aligns with the sensitivity required in lab-based methods.

What are the chances the test will yield a positive result?

Because total coliform presence is correlated to many things—including seasonality, rainfall, and geology—it's hard to predict a result. That's why regularly testing for indicators is highly recommended for private wells and required for public water systems.



What happens if the test is positive?

You have many options, including repairing your water system, servicing your well, or treating the well with chlorine injection or ultraviolet light. Should you receive a positive result, we're here to help you determine the best course of action for your home, family, and budget.



What happens if the test is negative?

No immediate action is required, but it's important to have a program in place to ensure testing occurs at least once a year, preferably in the warmer months as this carries the highest probability of external influence to your water. Or you can take a proactive approach and install a continuous method of treatment, like a whole-home UV system.

¹ Results provide screening ranges only, under typical conditions using standard presence-absence growth media techniques (USEPA Compliant – Standard Methods 9221 D), and are subject to all proper test directions and disclaimers provided by the test's manufacturer. Actual results may vary, and the test manufacturer and test provider and their partners, resellers, installers, and the like are not responsible for use of the above test, the test results, any treatment decisions, or for any water use; or for any damages arising therefrom including direct, special, treble, incidental, and/or consequential damages.