

COMMITTEE REPORTS - LAKES

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EGLE Media Office, EGLE-Assist@Michigan.gov, 517-284-9278

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Sara Pearson, Supervisor, Source Water Unit, PearsonS@Michigan.gov, 517-420-3219

Free well water testing now available for Michigan residents

The Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) is excited to announce a special program to help Michigan families know the quality of their well water. EGLE and local health departments (LHD) are working together to ensure that safe drinking water is a priority for Michigan families.

Last year, the Michigan Legislature appropriated \$5 million to provide free well water testing for Michigan residents who rely on a household or private well for their drinking water. Water from private wells may sometimes not be safe to drink. EGLE and the LHDs want to help families know if their water is safe to drink, and this free well water testing will help get them that answer.

Most wells get checked when they are first built; however, EGLE and the LHDs know that water wells should be checked more frequently as water quality may change over time. This testing can determine if there have been any water quality changes to your well that could be harmful to those who drink and use that well water.

Many different substances may be found in well water that could be harmful and may cause illness, including bacteria; nitrates; and some metals, such as arsenic. Residents who test through this free program will have the assistance of the LHD to help determine next steps if test results show a problem with their well water quality.

If you have a private well and you want to know if your water is safe to drink, here is what you can do:

- Talk to your LHD. They can tell you if there is anything special you need to know about the water in your area.
- Go to the EGLE website gov/EGLEPrivateWells. Here, you can add your information to ask for a water test. You will also learn more about how to collect a water sample to send to the laboratory.
- Don't worry if you are not sure what the laboratory results mean – your LHD will help you understand the results and will guide you on next steps, if necessary.

This free testing program is your first step in knowing if the water you drink from your private well is safe, and steps to take if an issue is found.

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