



TOWNS OF FREEDOM, REEDSBURG AND WESTFIELD RESIDENTS!



When was the last time you had your well water tested? If never, now is a good time. If it has been over two years, you are wise to test again.



The towns of Freedom, Reedsburg and Westfield, in collaboration with Sauk County, are offering a WELL WATER TESTING PROGRAM. We want to make it convenient for you to test your water and learn about potential threats and techniques to keep your drinking water safe for you and your family.



It is easy to get involved...

1.) Choose one, two or all three of the test options which are explained in detail on the next page.



2.) Pick up and pay for your water testing bottle(s) at the Freedom, Reedsburg or Westfield Town Hall on Friday, April 7, 2017, from 4-6 pm or on Saturday, April 8, 2017, from 9-11 am. Please make checks payable to UW-Extension.



3.) Collect your sample(s) **ON MONDAY**, April 10th, and return them to your town hall on the **SAME** day either from 7-9 am or 4-6 pm.

4.) Pick up your test results at an educational program on **Wednesday, May 10th in the CAL Center, 1100 S. Albert Ave in Reedsburg**. Registration begins at 5:45 pm; the program will start at 6:00 pm and will conclude by 7:30 pm. The educational program promises to be very interesting and is designed to help you interpret your results and show what you can do to keep your water safe to drink.

Sincerely,

Freedom Town Chair

Reedsburg Town Chair

Westfield Town Chair

Why test your well water?

Municipalities are required to test their water supplies regularly to ensure the water is safe to drink. Since there is no requirement to test a private well except for bacteria when it is first drilled or the pump is changed, you are responsible for making sure your water is safe. Most private wells provide a clean, safe supply of water; however, contaminants can pollute private wells, and unfortunately you cannot see, smell or taste most of them. Therefore, you should test your water on a regular basis.



What tests are available?

You can choose one, two or all three testing packages. If you choose to do all three tests, the package cost is **\$117.00**, a savings of \$8.00. If you are uncertain which test to do, we recommend the Homeowner Package, which analyzes eight different aspects of your water and will give you a very good indication of your drinking water's condition.

Available Drinking Water Tests	Cost
<u>Homeowner Package:</u> Includes tests for nitrate, coliform bacteria, pH, alkalinity, hardness, conductivity, corrosivity, and chloride.	\$49.00
<u>Metals Package:</u> Tests for arsenic, copper, lead, iron, manganese, zinc, potassium, sodium, sulfate, calcium, and magnesium.	\$49.00
<u>DACT Screen:</u> A test for triazine-type herbicides (like atrazine, simazine and propazine).	\$27.00

Homeowner Package:

Nitrate - This is a form of nitrogen that can dangerously reduce the amount of oxygen in the blood of infants under six months old. It may also harm the fetus. Nitrate is a common contaminant from fertilizers, septic systems, and animal waste. It may also indicate the presence of other contaminants or pollution pathways through the soil.

Bacteria - Bacteria, viruses, and parasites in water can cause disease. A coliform bacteria test indicates the possible presence of disease-causing bacteria from human or animal waste. Coliform bacteria are the most common contaminants found in private water systems.

pH - Indicates the water's acidity and helps to determine if water will erode plumbing.

Alkalinity - Alkalinity is the measure of water's ability to neutralize acids, and so is related to pH. It results primarily from dissolving certain minerals in the aquifer.

Hardness - Helps determine the need for water softening and also indicates corrosivity.

Conductivity – This measures the ability of water to conduct an electrical current due to dissolved substances in the water and can be used to signal the presence of contaminants.

Corrosivity Index – A combination of several tests, this indicates the tendency of water to corrode your plumbing or for lime deposits to form in pipes.

Chloride – High concentrations of chloride often indicate contamination problems from septic systems, fertilizers, landfills or road salts.

Metals Package:

Arsenic – naturally-occurring in soils and bedrock. Because of potential health concerns, recommend that every well be tested for arsenic at least once to determine if it is present in your well.

Lead & Copper – Lead and copper can leach into the water from pipes or solder and can present a significant health threat. Lead was typically used in pre-1985 plumbing.

Iron & Manganese – These are naturally occurring trace minerals that cause taste and color problems such as reddish-brown or black staining on fixtures.

Sodium – Sodium is often elevated in water from road salts, water softening salts, or septic system effluent. It is used to exchange with calcium and magnesium in water softeners; can cause elevated blood pressure in susceptible individuals. Natural levels are usually less than 5 mg/L.

Are there herbicides in your water?

Several herbicides have been found in Wisconsin's groundwater. Some of these have entered groundwater as a result of their use on farm fields. Others have been found in groundwater following spills and improper disposal. If your well is located within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of a corn, soybean or vegetable field, you should test your well water for herbicides. You should also consider a DACT herbicide screen if your well is within a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of an area where pesticides are manufactured, stored, mixed or loaded into application equipment. The health effects of herbicide exposure depend on a variety of factors, including the toxicity of the chemical, the dose, the duration and timing of exposure and the exposure to other chemicals.



DACT Screen – Atrazine, simazine and propazine are common herbicides used to control weeds in corn crops. A DACT screen tests for a specific breakdown component of these triazine-type herbicides and is generally a good first indicator of herbicide contamination in wells that are located near corn fields.



Sauk County UW Extension
505 Broadway
Baraboo, WI 53913

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What's in Your Water?



When was the last time you had your drinking water tested? The towns of Freedom, Reedsburg and Westfield, in collaboration with Sauk County, are offering a convenient **DRINKING WATER TESTING PROGRAM.**

Sponsored by:

Towns of Freedom, Reedsburg and
Westfield

Sauk County UW-Extension



<http://sauk.uwex.edu>

For more information:

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