

## HEALTH DISTRICT CONTACT INFORMATION

### Panhandle Health District

208-415-5200

[www.phd1.idaho.gov](http://www.phd1.idaho.gov)

(serving Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai and Shoshone counties)

### Public Health - North Central District

208-799-3100

[www.idahopublichealth.com](http://www.idahopublichealth.com)

(serving Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, and Nez Perce counties)

### Southwest District Health

208-455-5400

[www.swdh.org](http://www.swdh.org)

(serving Adams, Canyon, Gem, Owyhee, Payette and Washington counties)

### Central District Health Department

208-375-5211

[www.cdhd.idaho.gov](http://www.cdhd.idaho.gov)

(serving Ada, Boise, Elmore and Valley counties)

### South Central Public Health District

208-737-5900

[www.phd5.idaho.gov](http://www.phd5.idaho.gov)

(serving Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Twin Falls counties)

### Southeastern Idaho Public Health

208-233-9080

[www.siphidaho.org](http://www.siphidaho.org)

(serving Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Butte, Caribou, Franklin, Oneida, and Power counties)

### Eastern Idaho Public Health District

208-522-0310

[www.eiph.idaho.gov](http://www.eiph.idaho.gov)

(serving Bonneville, Clark, Custer, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, and Teton counties)

## IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

### Licensed Well Drillers

[research.idwr.idaho.gov/apps/wellconstruction/Licwelldrillers/](http://research.idwr.idaho.gov/apps/wellconstruction/Licwelldrillers/)

### Ground Water Protection Section

Boise: 208-287-4800

[www.idwr.idaho.gov](http://www.idwr.idaho.gov)

**Northern Region, Coeur d'Alene:** 208-762-2800

**Eastern Region, Idaho Falls:** 208-525-7161

**Southern Region, Twin Falls:** 208-736-3033

**Western Region, Boise:** 208-334-2190

## IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Water Program

Boise Office 208-332-8597

[www.agri.state.id.us](http://www.agri.state.id.us)

## IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE

### Bureau of Community and Environmental Health

1-800-445-8647

[environmentalhealth.dhw.idaho.gov](http://environmentalhealth.dhw.idaho.gov)

[bceh@dhw.idaho.gov](mailto:bceh@dhw.idaho.gov)

### Idaho Bureau of Laboratories

208-334-2235

[www.statelab.idaho.gov](http://www.statelab.idaho.gov)

[statelab@dhw.idaho.gov](mailto:statelab@dhw.idaho.gov)

## IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

208-373-0502

[www.deq.idaho.gov](http://www.deq.idaho.gov)

## NSF INTERNATIONAL

Consumer Hotline 1-800-673-8010

[www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org)

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# IS MY WELL WATER SAFE?

Tips to Protect Your Well Water



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE  
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

## IS MY WELL PROPERLY BUILT?

Private wells can provide a clean, safe source of water if they are properly located, built, and maintained. Use a licensed well driller and follow the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) requirements for drilling a well (numbers are on back). To protect your well from contamination, you should follow inspection tips on the “system maintenance log” found online at [environmentalhealth.dhw.idaho.gov](http://environmentalhealth.dhw.idaho.gov).

## WHY SHOULD I TEST MY WELL?

It is your responsibility as a private well owner to ensure that the water is safe. Sources such as septic systems, farm animals, farm chemicals, and naturally occurring chemicals can contaminate your well water. High levels of contamination can put you and your family’s health at risk. Make sure your well water is safe by testing it.

## HOW DO I TEST MY WELL WATER?

A certified lab or your local health district may be able to test your well water for contaminants. Staff will tell you how to collect your water sample and costs for the tests. Contact your local health district for information on testing your well (numbers are on the back of this brochure).

## WHAT CONTAMINANTS SHOULD I TEST FOR?

Idaho well water may contain several harmful contaminants. The table shows typical contaminants, how often you should test your well water for them, and treatment levels. If you live in an agricultural area and/or you have underground tanks with

petroleum, it is recommended that you also test your well water for pesticides and/or petroleum. If your well is damaged or flooded, or if you notice significant changes in taste, smell, or color, get your well re-tested for contaminants.

Type of contaminant	When to test	When To Treat
Bacteria	Once a year	Treat any amount
Nitrate	Once a year	If 10 mg/L or higher
Nitrite	Once a year	If 1 mg/L or higher
Arsenic	Once every 3 to 5 years	If 0.01 mg/L or higher
Uranium	Once every 3 to 5 years	If 30 µg/L or higher
Fluoride	Once every 3 to 5 years	If 4 mg/L or higher

*mg/L = milligrams per liter of water*  
*µg/L = micrograms per liter of water*

## WHAT DO THE TEST RESULTS MEAN?

Typically, the lab results will tell you the level of a contaminant in your water. The table shows what levels are considered safe. If you have contaminant levels higher than those in the table, you should fix the problem. If you have pesticides or petroleum in your water please call the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (IDHW, number on back of brochure) for information on what test results mean.

## HOW CAN I FIX A PROBLEM?

If you have a problem, you may need to disinfect your well, repair your system, find an alternative drinking water source, and/or install a water treatment device to remove contaminants. When installing a treatment system look for NSF International certified treatment devices. Your local public health district can help you determine the best method to fix the problem.

## HOW DO I KEEP MY WELL WATER SAFE?

Well maintenance is very important to keep your water safe. It is recommended that once a year you check your well covering, casing, and well cap for cracks and look for other areas where pollutants could enter your water. For treatment devices, follow the manufacturers’ suggested maintenance schedules. A “system maintenance log” can help you keep track of any water test results, as well as any construction and contractor details. A copy of a log is available online at [environmentalhealth.dhw.idaho.gov](http://environmentalhealth.dhw.idaho.gov).