ASHLAND COUNTY LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

Ashland County Land and Water Conservation Department
315 Sanborn Ave., Suite 100
Ashland, WI 54806-1014

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Registration for Ashland County Well Testing

You are invited to learn more about your groundwater by participating in a **drinking water testing program** sponsored by the Ashland County Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD).

A priority of the Ashland County LWCD is to protect drinking water and groundwater through monitoring, education, healthy land practices, and proper well abandonment. This program is not mandatory or regulatory; it is simply an educational opportunity to learn about your groundwater and receive recommendations to ensure clean, healthy drinking water.

In conjunction with the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Water and Environmental Analysis Lab, the Ashland County LWCD is excited to announce the opportunity for Ashland County property owners again this spring. The Lab is state-certified to perform these tests. We are offering two test packages per well sampled: The **Homeowner's Package** tests for nitrate, coliform bacteria, pH, alkalinity, hardness, conductivity, corrosivity, and chloride; and the **Metals Package** tests for aluminum, arsenic, calcium, copper, iron, lead, magnesium, manganese, potassium, sodium, strontium, sulfate, uranium, and zinc. More information on parameters is attached to help inform your testing decisions.

DON'T SEND ANY MONEY. We need your registration before **April 2nd, 2026,** to reserve your test kit, and will collect payment at the time of bottle pickup. Ashland County is offering a **$53.00 discount** per test as funding allows. We will start a waiting list for next year if interest exceeds funding capabilities.

To participate, you must be able to commit to the following:

- Pick up and pay for your sample bottles at the Ashland LWCD office* **8 AM- 4 PM from April 6th to April 10th, 2026.**
- **Collect and return your sample** on **Monday, April 13th, 2026, between 8 AM and 2 PM at the Land and Water Department office*,** following the directions provided with your sample bottles.

*An additional pick-up/drop-off location will be set up at the **Agenda Town Hall**, 13922 Agenda Road, Butternut, WI 54514. **Pick up on April 9th and drop off April 13th** during the hours listed above.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at the information listed at the top of this letter. We hope to hear from you soon!

Yes! I'm interested in testing my drinking water!

To reserve your test kit, please fill out this form completely and clearly and return it to the address below by April 2nd, 2026.

Ashland County LWCD
315 Sanborn Ave., Suite 100
Ashland, WI 54806-1014

Print Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Well Address/Location, if different: _____

_____

Unique Well ID (if known): _____

☐ **Homeowners package only $25.00** (originally $78.00)

☐ **Homeowners and Metals Package $100.00** (originally $153.00)

☐ I am also aware of unused wells that need proper abandonment (we will contact you with more information about our cost-share program)

Comments or suggestions:

_____

_____

_____

HOMEOWNERS PACKAGE- CHOOSE THIS OPTION IF:

- You are unsure of which tests to perform; this is our basic introductory test recommended for every private well.
- Includes the two most important tests to perform routinely on a well (bacteria and nitrate).

Note: Nitrate + nitrite (N) results from the Homeowner Package **may not** be used to determine or evaluate compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). **Contact the lab for assistance if compliance results are needed.**

This package includes the following parameters:

- **Coliform Bacteria:** This test determines the sanitary condition of a water supply. Indicates whether or not the water supply is bacteriologically safe. This is the most important test to perform regularly on a private water system. If coliform bacteria are detected, the sample will also be checked for *E. coli* bacteria. Priority analysis is available.
- **Nitrate plus Nitrite-Nitrogen:** Nitrate is the most widespread chemical contaminant in Wisconsin's groundwater. Elevated levels may serve as an indicator of other potential contaminants, such as pesticides or chemicals associated with septic system effluent. The safe drinking water standard for nitrate-nitrogen is 10 mg/L. Priority analysis is available.
- **pH:** Measure of relative acidity of the water. Useful in assessing the corrosivity of water to plumbing.
- **Alkalinity:** Amount of bicarbonate, the major anion in water, related to pH and corrosion.
- **Hardness:** Measure of the amount of calcium and magnesium. Important if water softening is considered.
- **Chloride:** An indicator ion that, if found in elevated concentrations, points to potential contamination from septic systems, fertilizer, landfills, or road salt.
- **Conductivity:** Measure of total dissolved minerals in water. Changes in conductivity or an unusual ratio of conductivity to hardness may signal the presence of contaminants.
- **Corrosivity Index:** A calculation of the corrosivity index is performed to determine the tendency of plumbing to corrode or for lime to deposit in your plumbing.

METALS PACKAGE- CHOOSE THIS OPTION IF:

- You have never had your well tested for arsenic and/or manganese; this is a good test to perform at least once on all private wells to understand the extent of common metals and minerals in your water.
- Your plumbing system contains copper and/or lead.
- You are experiencing problems with staining or taste.
- Previous test results detected the presence of arsenic.

Note: Metals results from the Standard Metals Package **may not** be used to determine or evaluate compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). **Contact the lab for assistance if compliance results are needed.**

This package includes the following parameters:

- **Aluminum:** Naturally occurring in Wisconsin groundwater, though concentrations vary depending on geology. There is a Wisconsin public health related groundwater standard for aluminum of 0.2oo mg/L.

- **Arsenic Screen:** The safe drinking water standard for arsenic in drinking water is 0.010 mg/L. The source of arsenic in groundwater is generally associated with naturally occurring arsenic in soils and mineral deposits. In rare cases, past pesticide use practices (especially those associated with cherry orchards), or improper disposal of arsenic-containing chemicals may also be potential sources.
- **Calcium:** Naturally occurs in groundwater where soils or underground rock formations contain limestone or dolomite. Essential to bone and tooth development, blood clotting, muscle contraction, nerve transmission, and may reduce heart disease. Along with magnesium, causes hard water.
- **Copper:** Not naturally found in significant concentrations in Wisconsin's groundwater. Elevated levels of copper are generally caused by corrosion of copper plumbing. Acidic or corrosive water exacerbates corrosion of copper plumbing. In small amounts, copper aids in iron utilization in the body. Levels above 1.3 mg/L exceed the safe drinking water standard.
- **Iron:** Naturally occurring mineral which causes taste problems and discoloration of water. Important component of blood hemoglobin.
- **Lead Screen:** The safe drinking water standard for lead in drinking water is 0.015 mg/L. Not naturally occurring in Wisconsin groundwater. Found in water supplies with lead solder or pipes–especially when water is corrosive or soft.
- **Magnesium:** Naturally occurs in Wisconsin groundwater. Along with calcium, causes hard water.
- **Manganese:** Naturally occurring in some groundwater. Elevated levels of manganese in groundwater can result in aesthetic problems. Black precipitates (specks or staining) are often a result of manganese. There is a health advisory limit of 0.300 mg/L manganese. Problematic levels of manganese and iron are sometimes found together since both are associated with low levels of oxygen in groundwater.
- **Potassium:** Levels greater than 10 mg/L may indicate contamination from animal waste or may come from water softeners that use potassium chloride.
- **Sodium:** Water supplies that are softened will contain elevated levels of sodium if sodium chloride is used as the softener salt. Elevated levels in groundwater may be the result of road salt or septic system effluent.
- **Strontium:** Naturally occurring mineral present in Wisconsin groundwater. Strontium concentrations in groundwater vary across Wisconsin based on geology. It is recommended to avoid drinking water with concentrations of strontium equal to or greater than 1.50 mg/L.
- **Sulfur as Sulfate**: Naturally occurring in some groundwater. Concentrations above 250 mg/L may cause a laxative effect, especially in people not accustomed to drinking the water. Sulfate is not the same as hydrogen sulfide which causes the rotten egg odor, although both contain the element sulfur.
- **Uranium Screen:** Uranium is a naturally occurring element present in groundwater, typically at low levels, due to geologic deposits. The safe drinking water standard for uranium in drinking water is 0.030 mg/L.
- **Zinc:** Concentrations greater than 1 mg/L usually occur only when corrosive water is distributed through galvanized pipes, or in zinc mining areas.