

Many homes rely on a private well.

About 1 in 5 homes in Minnesota rely on a private well for their drinking water. Private well users are responsible for making sure the water is safe for everyone in the household to drink.



Moving into a new home is a great time to test your water. The Minnesota Department of Health recommends you test for five common contaminants.

Protect your health!

Test your well water for:

- 
- Coliform Bacteria**
(Every year)
 - Nitrate**
(Every year)
 - Arsenic**
(At least once)
 - Lead**
(At least once)
 - Manganese**
(At least once)

Testing is even more important if young children drink the water.

Questions?

Your realtor or local well contractor are excellent resources for questions about private wells at property transfer.

Contact the Minnesota Department of Health if you have questions about your water quality, testing, treatment, or well construction.

Minnesota Department of Health

625 Robert Street North

P.O. Box 64975

St. Paul, MN 55164-0975

651-201-4600 or 800-383-9808

health.wells@state.mn.us

www.health.state.mn.us/wells



Resources

Water Quality and Testing

(www.health.state.mn.us/wellwater)

Search for Accredited Laboratories

(www.health.state.mn.us/labsearch)

Home Water Treatment

(www.health.state.mn.us/homewatertreatment)

Minnesota Well Index

(www.health.state.mn.us/mwi)

Licensed Well and Boring Contractor Directory

(www.health.state.mn.us/lwsearch)

To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-4600.

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Buying or Selling a Home with a Private Well

Safe water, healthy home.



What to look for

A newer well will have:

- A weather-proof cap
- 12 inches of clearance above the ground surface
- A well ID tag with a unique well number



Not all wells look alike. Many pre-code, or older wells may look different. These could be missing components shown in the photo above or be a dug or buried well. If you're having trouble finding a well on the property, contact a licensed well contractor.

If you're selling a home with a well

- ✔ Your realtor will help you with any paperwork you may need to bring to the property closing and can help you look up information on your well.
- ✔ Provide a Well Disclosure Statement indicating the location of all known wells on the property and if they are in use.
- ✔ Compile any previous water testing results or construction paperwork you have on your well for the new owner.
- ✔ Seal any unused wells on the property.

If you're buying a home with a well

Your realtor can help find available information about wells on the property. There may not be a public record of your well if it was constructed before 1974. You may be able to find information about the well on the Minnesota Well Index.

Ask the seller questions such as:

- When was the water last tested? What was it tested for?
- Are there any water treatment systems currently in place?
- Have there been water quality issues in the past?
- Are there any well records available?

Test your drinking water when you move into the home through an accredited laboratory, if you find contaminants above a safe level, there may be cost-effective ways to remove or reduce the contaminant.



Legal Requirements

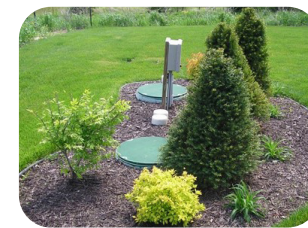
In Minnesota, sellers are responsible for disclosing any known wells on the property and if they are in use.

The state of Minnesota does not require testing of water at property transfer however, some counties in Minnesota do. Check local ordinances to see if the home is in one of these areas.

Septic Systems

If there is a private well on the property, there is usually also a septic system. Septic systems treat wastewater on the property and need to be maintained regularly in order to function properly.

Not all septic systems are alike and can vary from property to property. Many property transfers in Minnesota will require a compliance inspection report of the septic system.



All About Septic Systems
(<https://septic.umn.edu/all-about-septics>)

Septic systems are regulated at a local and state level. If you have questions about your septic system or compliance inspection report, contact your local permitting authority or planning and zoning office.



Tip: Wells are not typically looked at as part of a home inspection. Ask your inspector to examine any wells on the property for obvious issues such as cracks, or contact a licensed well contractor.