



Towns of Caledonia, Ft. Winnebago, Lewiston & Newport

Drinking Water Testing & Education Program.

Sponsored by:

Towns of Caledonia, Ft. Winnebago, Lewiston & Newport

Columbia County UW-Extension

Columbia County Land & Water Conservation

Columbia County Health Department

UW-Extension, Lower Wisconsin River Basin



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UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX requirements. Advise us at least two weeks before the event if you are handicapped and desire special accommodations. Requests will be confidential.

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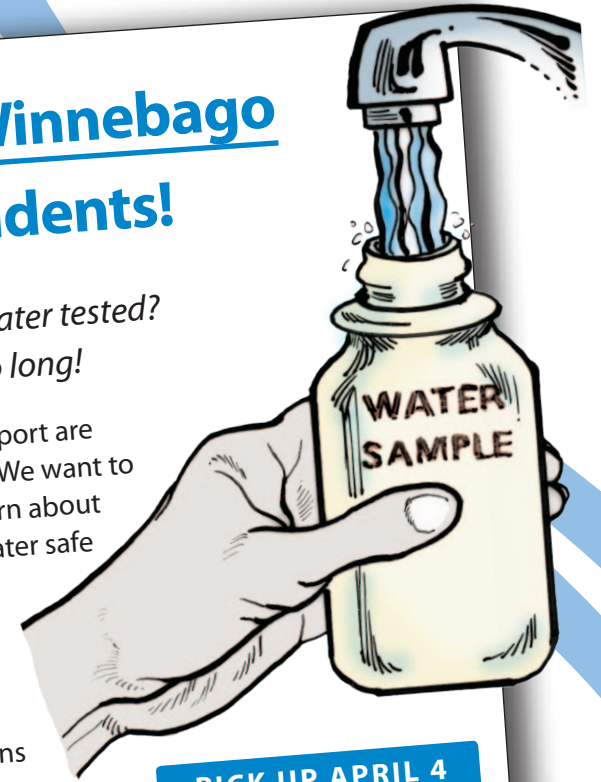
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Towns of Caledonia, Ft. Winnebago Lewiston & Newport residents!

When is the last time you had your drinking well water tested?
If it has been **over two years**, you have waited too long!

The Towns of Caledonia, Ft. Winnebago, Lewiston and Newport are offering a **Drinking Water Testing & Education Program**. We want to make it convenient for you to test your well water, and learn about potential threats and techniques to keep your drinking water safe for your family. We ask that landlords please share this information with your renters.



It is easy to participate...

1) **Choose one, two or all three** of the test options that are explained in detail in this flyer.

2) **Pick up and pay for** your drinking water testing bottle(s) on **Saturday, April 4th from 8 to 10 am**. Test kits will be given out on a "first-come-first served" basis. **Only 150 test kits are available** (45 kits for Caledonia residents, 32 kits for Ft. Winnebago, 46 kits for Lewiston and 27 kits for Newport residents). Please make **checks payable to UW-Extension**. Test kits may be picked up at:

- **Town of Caledonia:** N5479 Beich Rd
- **Town of Ft. Winnebago:** W8349 Dumke Rd
- **Town of Lewiston:** W11195 Hwy 127
- **Town of Newport:** N9236 Town Hall Rd

3) **Drop off** your water sample(s) on **Monday, April 6th**, at your town hall from **6:30 to 8:30 am or 5 to 7 pm**.

4) **Pick up your test results** at an educational program in Portage. We will notify you of the date, time and location when you pick up your kit.
The educational program is designed to help you interpret your results and learn about the quality of your area's groundwater and what you can do to keep your water safe. Experts will help answer your water questions.

Sincerely,

Steve Pate
Town of Caledonia

Delmont Molden
Town of Ft. Winnebago

John Steinhaus
Town of Lewiston

Cecil Pittack
Town of Newport

**PICK UP APRIL 4
DROP OFF APRIL 6**



Why test your drinking 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. Because there is no single test that will tell you the safety of your water supply, packages of tests are available to address the most common contaminants in drinking water.

Available Drinking Water Tests	Cost
Homeowner Package: Includes tests for nitrate, coliform bacteria, pH, alkalinity, hardness, conductivity, corrosivity, and chloride.	\$42.00
Metals Package: Tests for arsenic, copper, lead, iron, manganese, zinc, potassium, sodium, calcium, magnesium and sulfate.	\$42.00
Triazine-type Pesticide Screen: Includes tests for triazine type pesticides like atrazine.	\$27.00

What tests are available?

There are three testing options available through this program and you may choose any combination. Here is a description of each option, why those tests are important and what they tell you about the safety of your water supply.

The cost to do all three tests is \$103 (a savings of \$8). We recommend the Homeowners Package if you are uncertain which one to do. It analyzes for the seven aspects of your water listed below and will give you a great start at understanding your water's condition. It includes the bacteria test, often considered the most important test for private well owners.

Homeowner Package includes:

- **Bacteria** – Coliform bacteria test is used to indicate the sanitary condition of your water supply system. The presence of coliform bacteria in a water sample indicates a potential pathway for bacteria, viruses and parasites from human or animal waste that can cause disease. Well owners are encouraged to perform this test annually, or any time you notice a sudden change in taste, color or odor.
- **pH** – Indicates the water's acidity and helps to determine if water will corrode plumbing.
- **Nitrate** – Infants less than six months of age and pregnant mothers should not drink water containing more than 10 parts per million nitrate-nitrogen because of concerns related to methemoglobinemia, a potentially fatal condition that reduces the amount of oxygen in the blood of infants. The source of nitrate contamination is generally fertilizers, septic systems and manure. Because nitrate moves readily through soil and groundwater, elevated levels may also indicate the presence of other contaminants.
- **Hardness** – Helps determine the need for water softening and also helps to calculate the corrosivity index.
- **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 ions.

- **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** – Chloride is often an indicator of other potential contaminants. Elevated levels of chloride often indicate contamination problems from septic systems, fertilizers, landfills or road salts.

Metals Package:

The following metals and minerals are analyzed in this package. In addition, your sample is analyzed for manganese, potassium, calcium, magnesium and sulfate.

- **Arsenic** – Arsenic is a naturally occurring element in some soils and bedrock. Water flowing through geologic materials that contain arsenic can sometimes dissolve levels that are a concern to human health. The safe drinking water standard for arsenic is 0.010 mg/L (or 10 parts per billion).
- **Lead & Copper** – Lead and copper can be leached into the water from copper pipes or lead solder (lead solder was typically used in pre-1985 plumbing). Levels of copper over 1.3 mg/L are a concern for health. The safe drinking water standard for lead is 0.015 mg/L (or 15 parts per billion).
- **Iron** – This is a naturally occurring trace mineral. While not a health concern, it causes taste and color problems.
- **Zinc** – A trace metal that is toxic in elevated concentrations. It is not naturally occurring, but comes from corrosion of galvanized plumbing or water tanks.
- **Sodium** – Not beneficial to health, a 30 mg/L standard is proposed by EPA and world health organizations. Sodium is often found in groundwater in elevated amounts from road salts, water softening salts, or septic system effluent. It is used to exchange with calcium and magnesium in water softeners. It causes elevated blood pressure in susceptible individuals. Natural levels are usually less than 5 mg/L.

Triazine-Type Pesticide Screen:

Numerous pesticides have been found in Wisconsin's groundwater. Some of these are a result of their use on farm fields, while others enter following spills and improper disposal. If your well is located within ¼ mile of a corn, soybean or vegetable field or within ¼ mile of where pesticides are manufactured, stored, mixed or loaded into application equipment, you should consider testing your well for pesticides.

- **Diaminochlorotriazine (DACT) Screen** – Atrazine is a commonly applied pesticide used to control weeds in corn fields and has been found in Wisconsin's groundwater. The DACT screen helps homeowners understand the likelihood that water exceeds health-based groundwater standards for atrazine and other triazine-type pesticides. It is a good first indicator of pesticide contamination in wells, and can help you to decide whether additional pesticides may also be a concern.

