

Spring Well Testing Results

The Driftless Area Water Study of Crawford, Richland and Vernon counties just conducted its second round of private well-water testing to gather data on the quality of drinking water in these counties. Richland County tested 68 wells. The counties worked with the UW-Stevens Point Center for Watershed Science and Education to coordinate the private well-testing project. Participating homeowners were asked to collect their water samples on the morning of April 19th and take them to one of the drop off sites. The samples were all taken to the Water and Environmental Analysis Lab in Stevens Point early the next morning. The testing was conducted that day. Results have been mailed out the participants.

RICHLAND COUNTY SPECIFICS: There are approximately 4, 175 private wells in Richland County. Letters were sent to 400 randomly chosen well owners, asking for their participation in this sample collection. The first 85 to respond and pick up vials were allowed to participate. There were 68 that actually returned samples for testing. The cost of the testing was \$55 and it was paid for by Richland County Land Conservation department.

In Richland County, of the 68 well samples collected, 8% of them testing greater than 10 mg/L nitrate-nitrogen, 3% tested positive for coliform bacteria with 1 testing positive for E. coli bacteria. Nitrate-nitrogen above 10 mg/L can pose health risks if consumed by infants, pregnant women and women trying to become pregnant. Routine coliform bacteria testing can be used as an indication of whether a well is capable of producing sanitary or bacteria safe water. The presence of E. coli in a water sample is conclusive evidence of fecal contamination in the well. Source tracking was not conducted as part of this project so the sources of E. coli are not known.

Richland

Nitrate (mg/L as N)

	Number	%
None Detected	14	21%
<= 2.0	24	35%
2.1 -5.0	14	21%
5.1-10.0	10	15%
10.1-20.0	5	7%
>20.0	1	1%

Average: 3.4 for 68 Samples

Coliform Bacteria	2	3%
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E. Coli Positives of the Coliform pos.	1	50%
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Richland

Fall 2020

Spring 2021

Nitrate (mg/L as N)

	Number	%	Number	%
None Detected	13	16%	14	21%
<= 2.0	32	41%	24	35%
2.1 -5.0	15	19%	14	21%
5.1-10.0	8	10%	10	15%
10.1-20.0	8	10%	5	7%
>20.0	3	4%	1	1%

Average:

4 for 79 samples

3.4 for 68 samples

Coliform Bacteria

25 32%

2 3%

E. Coli Positives

of the Coliform pos.

1 4%

1 50%