

PFAS Well Sampling | Frequently Asked Questions



Please note this information only pertains to homeowners that live within the Twin Cities East Metro communities that are part of the 2018 Minnesota 3M PFAS settlement.

Why are we testing your well or should we test your well?

If the State of Minnesota requested to sample your well, it is because your well is within the PFAS-impacted area of the East Metro: [Private Well Sampling in the East Metro Area \(arcgis.com\)](http://Private Well Sampling in the East Metro Area (arcgis.com)).

If your well is in the East Metro PFAS plume, you can request that we sample it: [Groundwater Sampling Request \(state.mn.us\)](http://Groundwater Sampling Request (state.mn.us)).

What is the testing process?

After completing the request form, your request will be sent to our sampling contractor, West Central Environmental Consultants (WCEC). They will contact you within 30 business days to schedule a sample. You may need to be home if we are unable to sample from an outside spigot. After the sample is collected, the lab will analyze the sample and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) work together to review the results. You will be contacted with the results and advised of any next steps within approximately 8-12 weeks.

What will you test my well for?

The East Metro Unit at the MPCA will only test for and report on the six PFAS compounds that have regulatory values. If you are located within the Baytown trichloroethylene (TCE) plume (Washington County Groundwater Plume Sites fact sheet) the MPCA may test for TCE as well. For all other contaminants, residents will have to arrange and pay for those tests.

A local organization, the Washington Conservation District, has organized well testing and information clinics to help residents in Washington County test their wells for contaminants other than PFAS: [Water Tests \(Washington County, Minnesota official website\)](http://Water Tests (Washington County, Minnesota official website)).

MDH maintains a list of additional certified testing labs throughout the state: [Search for Accredited Laboratories - Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program \(state.mn.us\)](http://Search for Accredited Laboratories - Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (state.mn.us)).

How often should my well be tested?

If your well is in the PFAS plume and has not received a well advisory, it should be tested every 1-3 years to ensure your water remains safe to drink. Consistent monitoring of wells allows for timely filtration in the event that concentrations in a well increase between testing events.

Who pays for the testing?

The sampling and analysis of your well water for PFAS is paid for by the 3M Settlement.

What do results in my area look like?

Search the East Metro private well sampling map to view nearby results:

[Private Well Sampling in the East Metro Area \(arcgis.com\)](http://Private Well Sampling in the East Metro Area (arcgis.com))

What if I am outside the East Metro PFAS plume?

If your well is outside the boundaries of the East Metro PFAS plume, the 3M Settlement does not cover the cost of testing. Please see the above section “What will you test my well for” for additional testing resources.

What happens if PFAS are detected?

If PFAS are detected in concentrations below the level of health concern, MDH will not recommend any changes to your drinking water. Please contact the MDH Risk Assessment Unit with health questions (contact information is provided below). The MPCA will continue to sample wells in the PFAS impacted area to ensure contamination remains below the level of health concern.

What happens if the concentration of PFAS are above state or federal values?

When PFAS contamination exceeds a level of health concern, MDH issues a well advisory, meaning the well water is considered unsafe to drink. You will immediately be offered free bottled water, and we will work with you to provide long-term safe drinking water by connecting to city water or installing a whole-home treatment system. If a city water connection is not available, a free whole-house granulated activated carbon (GAC) filter will be installed by a licensed professional.

What if I have not heard from the sampler or received my sampling results within 8-12 weeks?

If you have not heard from the sampler for scheduling within 30 business days of receiving an email that your request was approved, please email the sampler at the contact information below to schedule a sample. If more than 12 weeks has passed since your sample was collected, you can email the MPCA or call our help line (contact information is below).

What will the results mean to me?

Our staff will provide you with results and analysis and recommend any next steps. If you have questions after reading your results, we will answer questions related to the testing process and MDH will answer all health-related questions.

How can I reduce my exposure to PFAS?

Because PFAS are so widely found in the environment and consumer products, eliminating all exposure to PFAS is unlikely; however, you can take steps to reduce your exposure including limiting use of consumer products containing PFAS, following fish consumption guidance and more.

- [PFAS and Health \(Minnesota Department of Health\)](http://PFAS and Health (Minnesota Department of Health))
- [PFAS Reducing Exposures \(Minnesota Department of Health January 2024\)](http://PFAS Reducing Exposures (Minnesota Department of Health January 2024))

Contacts:

Minnesota Department of Health's Site Assessment and Consultation Unit
651-201-4897
health.hazard@state.mn.us

East Metro Private Well Program
651-757-2903
PFAS.Well.Sampling.MPCA@state.mn.us

Sampling Scheduling and Questions
West Central Environmental Consultants
612-238-0789