



Care for MiWell Sampling Project Frequently Asked Questions

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General Project Information

What is the Care for MiWell Sampling Project?

A statewide drinking water sampling effort MDHHS is conducting to investigate the quality of drinking water in Michigan private wells. As part of the project, MDHHS is offering Michigan residents drinking water sampling and information on their private residential wells and the plumbing in their home.

What is the purpose of the Care for MiWell Sampling Project?

The Care for MiWell Sampling project can help address gaps in knowledge for residents in Michigan about their drinking water and encourage consistent drinking water testing and well maintenance. The project will also provide helpful information to MDHHS about Michigan residents' knowledge and behaviors surrounding drinking water from private residential wells.

In 2025, MDHHS conducted a statewide drinking water survey to assess residents' knowledge, attitudes and beliefs about drinking water. The survey showed most private well owners agree they are responsible for maintaining their private well and the quality of their drinking water. The survey also found the following gaps in knowledge regarding well maintenance:

- The majority (58%) of private well owners did not know the private well water testing guidance for their homes.
- When asked if the homeowner or a professional has ever inspected any part of their private well, the most common response was "I don't know" (48%).
- Only a slim majority of people (52%) indicated they know the plumbing material of their home.

Who is the target population for the project?

Private well owners in Michigan.

When will the project be taking place?

The project begins in April and will be ongoing.

Is MDHHS conducting the sampling and testing?

Yes. MDHHS staff will be conducting the on-site well inspection and an MDHHS contractor will be conducting the drinking water sampling and laboratory testing.

What is the drinking water being sampled for?

- Aluminum.
- Antimony.
- Arsenic.
- Barium.
- Beryllium.
- Boron.
- Cadmium.
- Chromium (total).
- Coliform Bacteria/*E. Coli*.
- Copper.

- Iron.
- Lead.
- Lithium.
- Manganese.
- Mercury.
- Methane.
- Nickel.
- Partial Chemistry.
- Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).
- Radium.
- Selenium.
- Semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs).
- Silver.
- Thallium.
- Uranium.
- Vanadium.
- Volatile organic compounds (VOCs).
- Zinc.
- 1,4 – Dioxane.

Local Health Department Information

Will MDHHS notify each health department before coming to their jurisdiction?

Yes. Prior to sampling, MDHHS will contact and set up a meeting with each health department to discuss project details and talk about any concerns. Our staff will give an overview of the project, the anticipated dates MDHHS plans to be in the community and provide project materials before sampling starts in each area.

How will MDHHS promote the project?

The project will be promoted statewide via the MDHHS [Care for Mi Drinking Water website](https://www.michigan.gov/CareforMiDrinkingWater) (URL: [Michigan.gov/CareforMiDrinkingWater](https://www.michigan.gov/CareforMiDrinkingWater)).

MDHHS will also discuss options for additional community outreach (including promotion at events, additional presentations, sharing of optional social media postings and more) with each local health department that may help to increase public awareness and participation in the project.

Can MDHHS share data with local health?

Each health department will receive aggregate results in the form of summary presentations and statewide reports. In addition, MDHHS will provide jurisdiction-specific summaries that include the average and range of each contaminant by region. These summaries are intended to give insight into what residents may be experiencing with their drinking water.

If health departments prefer address level data, they will need a data-sharing agreement and can begin that process by contacting Liz Richie at RichieE1@michigan.gov.

How will local health departments be notified of potential concerns?

Health departments will be made aware of sampling in their area before it begins. If there are results above the health-based screening value (an exceedance) detected in the sampling area, MDHHS will inform the health department. MDHHS will work with the local health department to address the concern.

Resident/Participant Information

What will participants receive if they enroll in the project?

- Free drinking water sampling.
- In-person education on their private well and home's plumbing.
- Resources on how to maintain and improve their water quality, including a results letter and full lab report with their sampling results.

How will participants be recruited?

1. MDHHS will send a recruitment letter to randomly selected homes within each randomly selected area.
2. The recruitment letter invites those residents to fill out an interest form to participate.
3. The randomly selected households will be contacted and offered the opportunity to participate by scheduling an appointment for drinking water sampling.

Who is eligible to enroll?

Residents who receive a recruitment letter from MDHHS and have a private residential well on their property used for drinking, cooking and/or bathing.

How do residents enroll in the project?

There are two ways to sign up for consideration for this effort:

1. Scan the QR code at the bottom of the recruitment letter and complete the interest form.
2. Call 800-648-6942 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday – Friday and let our staff know you are interested in the Care for MiWell Sampling Project.

Do residents have to participate if they are invited?

No, participation is voluntary. Those who do not respond will be considered a passive refusal and the invitation will be made to another resident.

If a resident declines to participate, but changes their mind later, will they be able to participate?

Due to the limited nature of this project, we may not be able to offer this opportunity again if an invited participant declines. Additional households may be invited to participate to replace households that decline this offer.

How will participants' privacy/data be protected?

The Care for MiWell Sampling project will never publicly release information that could identify participants, such as their name or address. All staff are required by law to maintain confidentiality for all project participants.

How long will it take for residents to receive their results?

Due to the number of analytes, or chemicals, being tested, it may take 90-120 days for residents to receive their full results from MDHHS. Anything of public health concern will be immediately communicated with a phone call from an MDHHS staff member.

How will residents receive results?

Once water sampling results are finalized by the MDHHS lab, households will receive a mailed letter notifying them that their results are available online. Within the mailed notification letter, participants will be provided with a web link where they can view:

- Drinking water lab results.
- Information about their private residential well and the plumbing in their home.
- Fact sheets about private residential well maintenance and the analytes MDHHS sampled for.
- Drinking water treatment recommendations (if applicable).

Residents who prefer a printed copy of their results can request a printed results packet by mail.

MDHHS will also issue a report summarizing the results from Care for MiWell participants across the state. We will let residents know when the report is ready.

What happens if results are a public health concern?

If a household receives water sampling results that are of public health concern, they will receive a phone call from an MDHHS staff member to discuss next steps and public health recommendations. For households associated with a site of contamination, such as PFAS or lead, the MDHHS staff member will consult with that program (such as PFAS or Get Ahead of Lead) to determine which resources are available for that residence.