



**ST. JOSEPH COUNTY**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

# St. Joseph County Department of Health

*“To promote health and wellness with compassion and integrity through partnerships, education, protection, and advocacy for all who reside in and visit St. Joseph County.”*

## WATER TESTING REQUIREMENTS

### Background

In order to protect public health in St. Joseph County, County Code 52 requires that the water quality be tested anytime a new well is installed and anytime a property with an onsite well is sold for both residential and commercial properties.

The testing is very important to the health of residents because the process of drilling a well frequently introduces harmful bacteria into a well. After the installation of a new well, the well drilling company must disinfect your water system with chlorine bleach or by another acceptable method. If the disinfection does not kill the bacteria, they must repeat the disinfection at least once at no cost to the property owner. Also, there are areas within the county that have high levels of arsenic and nitrates which can be very hazardous to health.

### Testing Requirements

The drinking water for any commercial or residential property for a new well or property being transferred shall be analyzed for the following parameters:

- a. Total Coliform Bacteria
- b. E. coli Bacteria
- c. Nitrates
- d. Arsenic
- e. Any other tests as deemed reasonable and necessary and ordered by the Health Officer on a case-by-case basis to the extent that such tests protect against a health threat.

Samples shall be collected from the primary point of use. For residential properties, the primary point of use is designated to be the kitchen faucet unless a water treatment unit is installed. The process for testing the water is easy and can be described in these simple steps:

- a. Pick up a sample bottle from one of the laboratories shown below. You must use their bottles.
- b. Collect a sample from the kitchen tap according to the directions provided with the sample bottle.
- c. Return the sample bottle to the laboratory.
- d. The results will be sent to you and the Health Department.

If the Water does not meet U.S. EPA Primary Drinking Water Standards, the well water may be disinfected and retested OR suitable water treatment devices must be installed at the primary point of use depending on the failure.

This is NOT a permit. For new wells, it is the homeowner's responsibility to have the drinking water tested within 30 days of the installation. The cost of the water analysis is not included in the well permit or the property transfer fee and is payable to the water testing laboratory of your choice.

### St. Joseph County Area State Certified Water Laboratories

**Element Materials Technology**  
3371 Cleveland Road, Suite 100A  
South Bend, IN 46628  
Phone: 574-277-0707

**EMSL Analytical, Inc.**  
6340 Castleplace Drive  
Indianapolis, IN 46250  
Phone: 317-803-2997

**Garrett Laboratories, Inc.**  
408 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Nile, Michigan 49120  
Phone: 800-336-3201

**Your Environmental Services**  
4609 Grape Road, Suite D  
Mishawaka, IN 46545  
Phone: 574-272-8484

Please send all electronic correspondence for the Environmental Health Division to [envirohd@sjcindiana.com](mailto:envirohd@sjcindiana.com)