



Florence County Health Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Drinking Water Quality in Private Wells

Florence, WI –

Does your tap water suddenly or consistently smell? Contaminants in your drinking water can be the cause of an odor when you turn on your indoor or outdoor faucets. According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), common contaminants in drinking water are arsenic, copper, lead, radium or volatile organic compounds (VOCs) causing a rotten egg, manure, gasoline or sewage smell. Contaminants may also cause your water to appear rusty or red, foamy, gritty or cloudy and even stain appliances.

An odor or appearance change in your drinking water may lead you to wonder about possible health concerns if you drink, shower or cook with it. For example, if your water smells like sewage, there could be a possible iron bacterium present. Data collected by the Wisconsin DNR shows most private wells in the state of Wisconsin provide safe drinking water, but the only way to make sure is with testing regularly. The Wisconsin DNR and Florence County Health Department recommend private well owners to test their water annually especially if young children, elderly or immunocompromised individuals live in the home.

Florence County Health Department offers bacteria water testing (Total Coliform and E. coli) for private residents at their in-house, certified water lab for a \$35 fee. Wisconsin residents can also obtain a sample kit to test for multiple contaminants (arsenic, lead, nitrate, etc.) through Wisconsin certified labs such as Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene.

For more information on what smells or colors are associated with what contaminants, testing, finding someone qualified to remediate an issue, or financial help for fix the problem, go to www.dnr.wisconsin.gov/DrinkingWater. Contact the Florence County Health Department at 715.528.4837 or visit 501 Lake Ave. in Florence, Wisconsin Monday thru Thursday 8:30am to 4:00pm.

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