



Florence County Health Department

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NEWS RELEASE

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Arsenic in Drinking Water

Florence, WI-

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has found arsenic contamination in water wells across the state, including areas of Florence County. Arsenic in drinking water poses serious health risks, including cancer, circulatory disorders, and diabetes from long-term exposure.

Arsenic occurs naturally from soil and bedrock and the main source of exposure is from drinking water. Other sources of arsenic exposure include food, dust, pesticides, and some treated lumber. Water with arsenic above 10ppb should not be used for drinking or cooking. The Wisconsin DNR recommends to obtain water from a known safe source until you can seek treatment solutions.

According to the Wisconsin Well Water Quality viewer (UW Stevens Point & UW Extension), arsenic is a contaminant in the wells across the county. There is an interactive map you can view that shows the levels of arsenic in parts per billion (ppb). For example, certain wells in Aurora have been tested and present a level of 16-20ppb. Find it at www.uwsp.edu/cwse/wisconsin-well-water-quality-viewer/.

How do you know how much arsenic is in your drinking water? Since you cannot smell, taste or see arsenic in your water, the Wisconsin DNR recommends testing for arsenic every five years or annually if you live in area with high arsenic levels. If you have a private well, you can submit a sample to the Florence County Health Department to send out for testing or you can use one of the certified water labs in the state. Those with drinking water from a public water system can check out the Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) for your town. Florence Utilities CCR is listed on <https://www.florenceutilitieswi.com>.

For more information, go to the Florence County Health Department webpage at 715-528-4837, <http://www.florencecountywi.com/>, or visit the DNR website at <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov> and search for Arsenic. The Florence County Health Department is located on the first floor of the courthouse.

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