

How to protect your water supply if you have a ....

## PRIVATE WELL OR SPRING

(A well or spring that serves less than 15 homes or 25 people)

Almost 3 million North Carolina residents use private wells. Most have never been inspected or tested for more than bacteria, yet it is important for well users to test their water regularly, because there are many sources of potential contamination of groundwater!

**If your well was installed after July 2008** (when the state began to require well licenses for new wells), **call your county's well program to:**

- ✓ Report odd tastes or odors.
- ✓ Request a copy of your water quality test results.
- ✓ Request a copy of your well certificate.
- ✓ Request additional testing if needed (test every 3-5 years).

Your county contact: \_\_\_\_\_

**If your well was installed before July 2008**, or if you're unsure, it's a good idea to **have your well tested!** No requirements were in place at the time.

- ✓ CWFNC recommends testing your well for **at minimum fecal coliform, arsenic, lead, zinc, nitrates, and nitrites**. A full water test (required since 2008) would also include *barium, cadmium, copper, fluoride, iron, magnesium, manganese, mercury, selenium, silver, sodium, and pH*. Testing for contaminants known to be nearby is a good idea, too.
- ✓ To get started, call your county's health department—they can often help with testing at a reduced cost. They can also test spring water!

Your county contact: \_\_\_\_\_

If there are nearby abandoned wells or old house or farm sites, **take steps to find old wells and seal them to prevent direct contamination of groundwater**. You can do this by marking the well clearly and contacting a well contractor (often listed in the phone book).

**Still have questions or concerns? Call Clean Water for North Carolina.**

Asheville office: [1-800-929-4480](tel:1-800-929-4480), [katie@cwfn.org](mailto:katie@cwfn.org)

Durham office: [919-401-9600](tel:919-401-9600), [hope@cwfn.org](mailto:hope@cwfn.org)

Website: <http://www.cwfn.org>

# Keeping your community's drinking water safe and affordable: A Guide for North Carolina residents



The water people drink in NC comes from many sources! Some residents drink groundwater from private or municipal wells, while others use treated surface water (from rivers, lakes, and streams, etc.) or spring water.

Some of the problems that can affect drinking water for families in North Carolina are water contamination, high water bills, water outages or leaks, and poor service from a private company or government water supplier. Clean Water for North Carolina has prepared this guide to help answer some questions about drinking water.

*Clean Water for North Carolina*

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How to protect your water supply if you use a ....

## **PUBLICLY OWNED WATER SYSTEM**

(You pay a water bill to a city, county or other government)

Publicly owned drinking water supplies must meet water quality standards overseen by the NC Public Water Supply Section of the Department of Environmental Quality. Rates are usually set by elected officials or an appointed board (for a regional provider). Both groundwater and surface water are used by NC local governments to provide drinking water to residences and businesses.

**For questions or complaints about your bill, water quality, or service, first try calling your water supplier directly!**

Changes to water rates, decisions about investments in the system, and other decisions are usually made at public government meetings. Get involved in decisions about your drinking water.

Name of your water supplier: \_\_\_\_\_

Your contact: \_\_\_\_\_

**For unresolved water quality issues, contact your regional office of the NC Public Water Supply Section.**

- ✓ Report problems with your water quality and request investigation
- ✓ Request a copy of your annual water quality report, or **to search for a copy of the report online at <https://www.pwss.enr.state.nc.us/NCDWW2>.**

Phone number of your regional office: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (central office): 1-(919) 707-9078

Website: <http://www.ncwater.org/?page=9>



*“Access to safe water is a fundamental human need and, therefore, a basic human right.” - Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary-General.*

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## **PRIVATELY OWNED WATER SYSTEM**

(You pay a water bill to a private company or corporation)

Private companies that supply drinking water must meet water quality standards overseen by the NC Public Water Supply Section of the Department of Environmental Quality. Privatized water systems often use community wells or resell purchased municipal water. Rates are regulated by the NC Utilities Commission for private utilities, including landlords who resell purchased water to tenants.

**For questions or complaints about your bill, water quality, or service, first try calling your water supplier directly!**

For private companies such as Aqua North Carolina and Carolina Water Service, it is important to report problems to their customer service line first so they have a record of your call. If you can find out the direct contact information for the local technician, try contacting them, too.

Name of your water supplier: \_\_\_\_\_

Your contact: \_\_\_\_\_

**For unresolved water quality issues, contact your regional office of the NC Public Water Supply Section—see information on the facing page!**

**For unresolved billing, notification, or water service issues, contact the NC Utilities Commission and NC Public Staff.**

- ✓ The Commission holds public hearings for some proposed rate hikes
- ✓ You can attend public hearings, send letters/emails, report any service problems and request investigation.

Consumer complaints line: 1-866-380-9816

Consumer statements: send to [statements@ncuc.net](mailto:statements@ncuc.net) and [consumer.services@psncuc.nc.gov](mailto:consumer.services@psncuc.nc.gov)

Website: <http://www.ncuc.commerce.state.nc.us>

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