



February 28, 2023

Dear Resident/Property Owner:

The Dakota County Environmental Resources Department is offering households/businesses in Inver Grove Heights that use private drinking water wells a **free water test kit**. If you would like to participate in this free testing, please:

complete the enclosed pre-paid postcard and mail it to our office no later than April 15 to be guaranteed a test kit

Or use the QR code/survey link on the back page of this letter

Once Environmental Resources has received the postcard or survey response, you can expect to receive a water test kit in the mail in the May-July 2023 timeframe. **This water testing opportunity does not include radium testing since this is not a common contaminant in private wells.** The water test kit will include two water sample bottles, sample collection directions, a survey for you to complete, and **pre-paid postage** to return the samples to the lab. Read the directions before collecting the samples. The first bottle is for an **outside** sample from your spigot/hydrant that will be analyzed for arsenic, chloride, nitrate, and manganese. The second bottle is for an **inside** sample from your primary drinking water faucet and will be analyzed for lead. If arsenic, nitrate, or manganese are high in the outside sample, the lab will analyze the inside sample for those as well. This is to compare your inside drinking water to outside sample results to see how well any treatments in the home are working to remove contaminants.

The testing is free to participants. It represents an investment in healthy drinking water by Dakota County that would cost participants \$80 to \$125 per household if purchased using our online order form. In Inver Grove Heights, manganese (from underlying soils and rocks) is a particular health concern for private well owners. A study conducted in 2015-16 found manganese above (failing) the drinking water guideline for infants in 194 out of 220 wells tested (71 percent) in the city. A water softener can effectively reduce manganese in drinking water.

Once the analysis is complete, you will receive the laboratory report and an explanation of your individual test results in the mail, also at no cost to you. Please see the back page for more information about our program and webpage, property transactions for well owners, and how we plan to use data from the study. Should you have questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (952) 891-7132 or write to matthew.belanger@co.dakota.mn.us.

Sincerely,

Matthew Belanger

Matthew Belanger -Environmental Specialist



Environmental Resources

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To scan the QR code and receive your free water test kit, point your smartphone's camera application at the image below as if you were going to take a picture. A clickable link will appear that leads directly to the survey.



Alternatively, you can reach the same survey by typing in the following link into your web browser:

https://dakotacounty.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eyTi59980ga1J3M

Finding your Unique Well # (optional):

If available, you can add your Unique Well # to the postcard or survey response. This is optional as not everyone will be able to locate their Unique Well #. You can locate your Unique Well # using one of three methods:

1. Physically locate the metal tag attached to your well.
2. Locate the Unique Well # on your original driller's log if you have it in your files.
3. Search for a record using the Minnesota Well Index: <https://www.mnwellindex.web.health.state.mn.us/mwi/>.

Who are we?

Most Dakota County residents, whether they use a city water supply or have a private well, use groundwater for their water source. The Groundwater Protection Unit within the Environmental Resources Department at Dakota County exists to provide groundwater expertise to the county and its residents. We do this by setting goals for water quality, quantity, and education/outreach, and by developing programs and services to improve and protect our precious groundwater resources. To learn more about groundwater and other water resources, visit

<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Environment/WaterResources/Pages/default.aspx>

How will we use the data?

The data from your well testing will be summarized in reports. Your name and address will not be identified. You will not be required to take any action with your water well based on participating in this study. Long term, we will store the data securely for possible future groundwater improvement projects.

Planning to move soon?

Dakota County Ordinance 114 requires private drinking water supply wells be tested within one year before a property transaction. The water sample must be collected from the untreated portion of the water supply by an independent third party, such as a septic compliance inspector, well contractor, or laboratory. More information is available at www.dakotacounty.us, search *Well Requirements*. Results from this water testing program do not qualify for property transactions, but will you give an idea of what to expect.

Want to know more about your well?

Dakota County also has delegated well authority in the county, which means the Minnesota Department of Health has delegated the regulation of well construction and sealing to us. To support that, we store and make available a lot of information about wells. Information about wells can be found on the Well Requirements page (shown above) using the DCGIS interactive map. Instructions are provided on that page but if you are having trouble feel free to reach out via the contact information on the front side of this letter.