

SPLASH INTO EXTENSION

Stormwater and Your Well

Rains that hit your roof, driveway, and other parts of your landscape end up as stormwater. Beyond the puddles and the annoyance of moving your landscaping mulch around, that stormwater can also be problematic to your drinking water supply. Stormwater can carry with it chemicals that you may have applied to your yard or even oils and other hazardous materials from your car among other things. That pollutant-laden stormwater can end up near your well and potentially introduce hazards to your water supply.

Visit

<http://communityenvironment.nl.edu/stormwater-runoff-and-your-well> for information on managing stormwater.

Water Question and Answer Testing Well Water



Q: We've recently moved to an acreage and would like to have our well water tested, how much will it cost?

A: (from Meghan Sittler, Extension Educator - Domestic Water & Wastewater)

While I'd like to give a simple and direct answer, that question doesn't have a single answer other than it varies and it depends. It varies and depends because there are many contaminants that can be present in water. Public drinking water systems are required to conduct tests on 100 different potential contaminants. If you were to conduct tests for all 100 potential contaminants on your private supply, the cost would approach \$4,000. If you aren't in the market for a \$4,000 drinking water test—which is definitely not necessary--the first step is to identify which contaminants are the most key to protecting your health and operation of the water system.

Nitrates and bacteria such as e-coli or total coliform are considered primary health hazards and pose the most immediate and serious risk to your health. High nitrate levels are most dangerous to babies and small children however, continued exposure to nitrates can result in serious health complications in people of all ages. Bacteria can cause severe gastrointestinal issues. At the very least, you should test for both bacteria and nitrates. Other contaminants such as the minerals calcium, iron, manganese and magnesium are considered secondary contaminants as they do not pose health risks but they can make water undesirable for domestic use due to change in taste, staining, or impact on portions of your water system.

Before deciding which contaminants you want to test for you can also talk to neighbors in the area to identify any issues they have had with certain contaminants. You also need to keep in mind that you should periodically test your well water as concentration of contaminants can change through time with the movement of groundwater or through land use changes or hazards that can impact your water supply.

Contact your local extension office for more information on testing sites and costs.