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Chippewa County Residents:

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is now accepting applications for the expanded American Rescue Plan Act Well Compensation and Well Abandonment Grant Programs. The programs will provide \$5 million to well owners to address contamination in their wells.

All Chippewa County residents deserve access to clean drinking water. Exposure to contaminants such as nitrates, bacteria, and arsenic can cause various health effects. Nitrate is the most common groundwater contaminant, and can be especially harmful to pregnant women (linked to birth defects) and infants. This program will help families secure the resources they need to access clean water.

The grant programs will support the replacement, reconstruction, treatment, or abandonment of contaminated private wells, covering up to \$16,000 in expenses.

Well Compensation Grant Program

The well compensation grant program provides funding to eligible landowners, renters, or business owners to replace, reconstruct, or treat contaminated private water supplies that serve a residence or non-community public water system wells. To be eligible, family income may not exceed \$100,000 for the prior calendar year.

A. Drinking Water Standards

- When a well produces water containing one or more substances of public health concern greater than or equal to a primary maximum contaminant level established in ch. NR 809, Wis. Admin. Code or an enforcement standard established in ch. NR 140, Wis. Admin. Code.

B. Bacterial Contamination

- You must supply two laboratory reports showing presence of E. coli, and provide information describing attempts to address the contamination through chlorination or other means and that the presence of bacteria persists.
- DNR may also rely on confirmation by DNR field staff of fecal contamination or advisory issued or reviewed by DNR indicating that the well should not be used for drinking water due to the presence of bacteria or another microbial pathogen.
- **Note**, coliform bacteria positive wells are **not eligible** unless they are also positive for E. coli or another microbial pathogen or another contaminant that exceeds an NR 809 MCL or NR 14 enforcement standard.

C. PFAS Contamination

- Wells are considered contaminated by PFAS compounds if the results of the water sample indicates that PFAS compounds are present at a level that is greater than or equal to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) groundwater recommendation standards.

D. Arsenic Contamination

- The water supply has been tested and arsenic concentration at or exceeding 10 ug/l (parts per billion) has been found.

E. Nitrate Contamination

- The water supply has been tested and nitrates concentration at or exceeding 10 parts per million has been found.

F. Other Contaminants

- Contaminants without an NR 809 maximum contaminant level, NR 140 enforcement standard, or DHS groundwater recommendation standard may be eligible if an advisory issued by DHS indicating that the well should not be used for drinking water due to the presence of the contaminant.

If you are concerned about your well water, we encourage you to sample your well water for contaminants. Costs for sampling may vary. Laboratories that are certified include:

- Chippewa County Public Health, [715-726-7900](tel:715-726-7900)
<https://www.chippewacountywi.gov/government/public-health-lab>
- Commercial Testing Lab, [\(715\) 962-3121](tel:715-962-3121)
<http://www.colfaxtestinglabs.com/labs-inquiry-form/>
- UW-SP Water and Environmental Analysis Lab, (715) 346-3209,
www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/weal/Pages/Homeowner.aspx
- Other certified labs can be found on this list:
dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/labCert/certified-lab-lists
- Households with pregnant women or infants may be eligible for free testing. Contact the Chippewa County Department of Public Health at 715-726-7900 for more information.

Well Abandonment Grant Program

The well abandonment grant program provides funding assistance to properly fill and seal abandoned or unused private or non-community public water system wells. Work completed before submitting an application and receiving DNR approval will not be reimbursed. To be eligible, family or business income may not exceed \$100,000 for the prior calendar year.

For more information, email <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/aid/WellAbandonmentARPA.html>

Sincerely,



Lynda Schweikert
Director
Chippewa Co. Land Conservation & Forest Management