

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WATER TEST RESULTS

Coliform Bacteria Analysis

NOTE: This test is time sensitive! If the sample does not arrive at the lab within 30 hours of being taken, results will not be valid. Preferably, samples should only be taken and mailed Monday – Wednesday to avoid the possibility of weekend postal delays.

If the lab report states:

This means:

Not detected

No coliform bacteria were detected in the water sample. The sample met the state drinking water standard at the time of sampling.

Positive for Total Coliforms

Coliform bacteria were detected in the water sample, and the water may not be safe for drinking. Have your water supply retested to confirm these results. Contact the Health Department for further instructions.

Positive for *E. Coli*

E. coli were detected in the drinking water sample, and the water may not be safe for drinking. Have your water supply retested to confirm these results. Contact the Health Department for further instructions.

Partial Chemical Analysis

Test Results in mg/L (ppm)

Note: ND = Not Detected – If substance is present, it is at a low enough level that it cannot be detected by the testing method used.

Test	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unacceptable	Potential Problems
Nitrate (as N)	0	1 – 10	Over 10	Nitrate poisoning, especially in infants
Nitrite (as N)	0	0 – 1	Over 1	Nitrite poisoning, especially in infants
Chloride	0 – 20	20 – 250	Over 250	Taste, corrosion
Fluoride	0.7 – 1.2	0 – 0.7 1.2 – 4.0	Over 4.0	Low levels beneficial in reducing tooth decay. High levels may cause bone disease or discoloration of teeth.
Hardness	50 – 125	125 – 250 25 – 50	Over 250 or less than 25	Scaling of water fixtures, laundry problems, water spotting, discolorations at high levels. Corrosion at low levels. (17.1 mg/L = 1 grain)
Iron	0 – 0.2	0.2 – 0.3	Over 0.3	Staining, cloudy water, taste, color, odor
Sulfate	0 – 50	50 – 250	Over 250	Laxative, taste, odor, buildup of scale on boilers and heat exchangers
Sodium	0 – 20	20 – 250	Over 250	Taste, special diets may require water with low sodium content