



NITRATES IN WELL WATER

THE PROBLEM: Nitrate-polluted private wells are more common in the Central Sands areas of Wisconsin. In addition, municipal systems can have varying amounts of nitrates. “Safe levels” of nitrates in drinking water are in dispute and are probably set too high, currently at 10 ppm.

HUMAN HEALTH ISSUES: Birth defects, blue-baby-syndrome, thyroid disease, colon cancer. These can develop silently. Nitrates in drinking water cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted. Cooking (boiling potatoes, pasta, rice, etc.) can intensify the effect. Without **TESTING**, you may not know you have a problem.

THE SOURCE: Commercial fertilizer on agriculture fields and excess manure (90%), septic systems (9%), lawn fertilizer (1%). Nitrate levels may vary by location due to multiple factors.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS: Nitrogen optimization legislation, ENFORCEMENT, voluntary reductions by producers, treatment systems installed at the source, repeated TESTING.

WHO'S WORKING ON THE PROBLEM: The Evers Administration, DATCP, local governments, some agriculture producers, farmer-led watershed organizations, the UW-Extension, & private groups. Other federal and state agencies ARE AWARE of the problem but need to “step-up”.

WHAT CAN I DO? TEST your well. ORGANIZE your neighbors, REPORT violations, DEMAND legislation, and VOTE.

MORE INFORMATION LOCALLY AT: Wood County Health Department, Wood County Land & Water Conservation Department, town officials, your County Supervisors, UW-Extension, and UWSP School of Watershed Science.

***Prepared by Wood County Citizens Water Group. The CWG meets the 3rd Monday of each month @ 2:00 pm in Room # 206 of the Wood County “River Block” building. All interested parties are cordially invited to attend.





The Citizens Water Group of Wood County (CWG) is an environmental conservation organization that was formed in 2016 to investigate and educate the public on water-related issues.

The subcommittee of the CWG is composed of seven members with a range of experience, expertise, and interest in protecting the waters of Wood County.

The CWG holds a meeting on the third Monday of each month at 2:00 PM. Check out the Wood County Meetings webpage for additional details regarding location and agenda items.

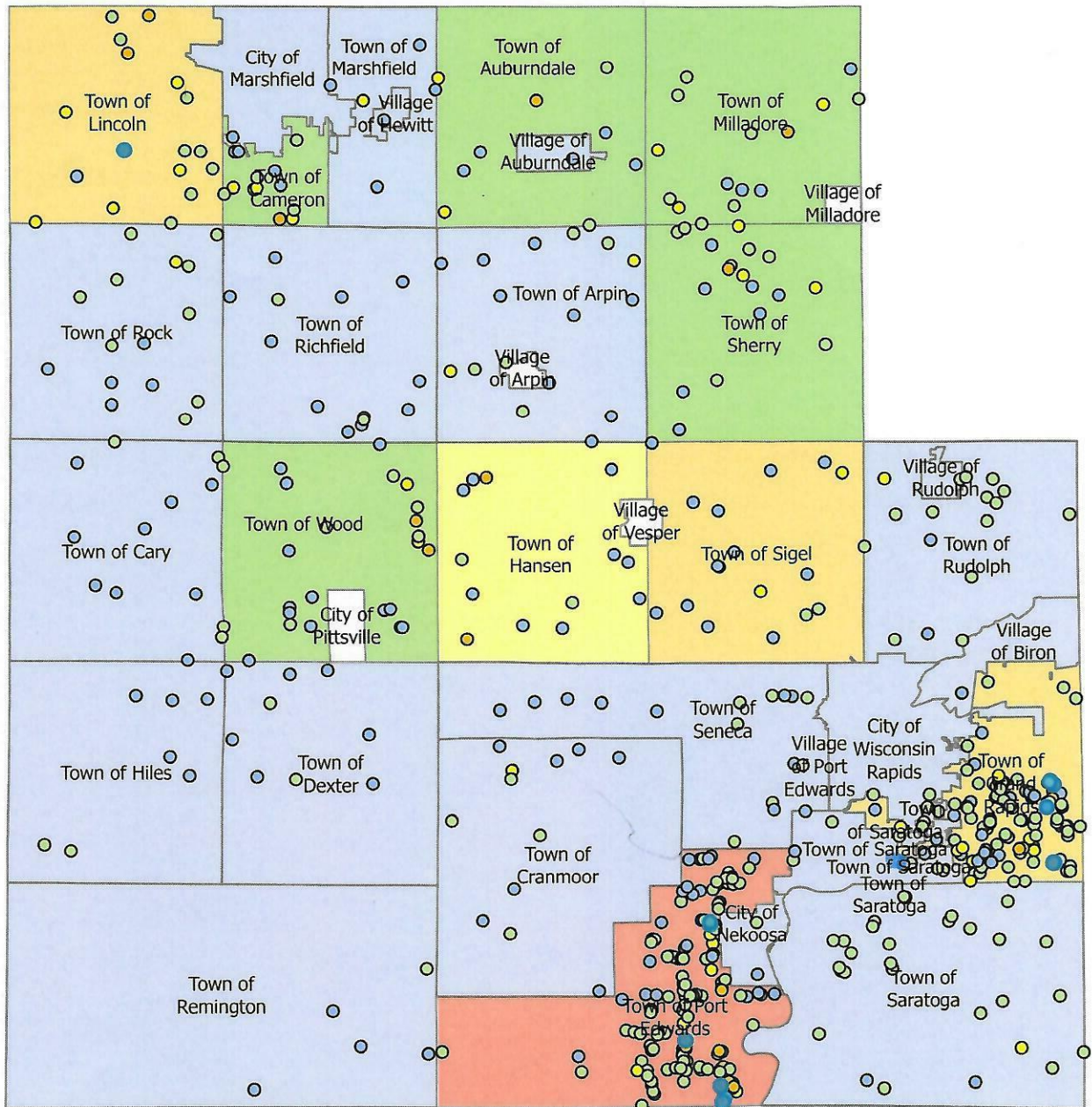
We are looking to engage the public with important water issues within the County and encourage you to join us at our meetings!

Let's work together to make our water safer.

-The Citizens Water Group

Nitrate Testing 2019-2024

Wood County, Wisconsin

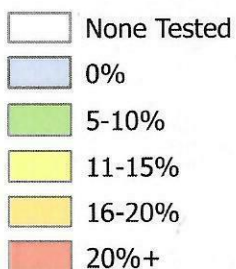


Well Water Testing

0 2.5 5 10 Miles



Percent of tests over 10 ppm, by municipality



Nitrate Results

● LOD	195 tests
○ <5	298 tests
● >5	72 tests
● >10	71 tests
● >20	20 tests

Wood County Land & Water

715-421-8475

River Block Division

UWSP - Kevin Masarik

Phone 715-

*13.8% of results were over 10 ppm (91/656), some people tested multiple times

Director of Water Shed Science



IS YOUR WATER SAFE TO DRINK?

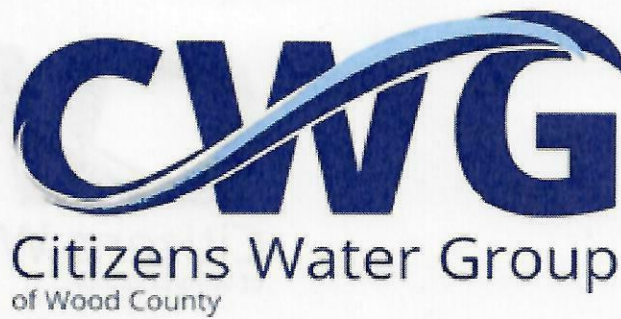
If you have a private well, did you know you should get your water tested every year for bacteria and nitrates and every five years for arsenic and lead?

These contaminants can cause health issues, such as the few listed below:

- High nitrates can cause birth defects, blue baby syndrome, thyroid disease, and increase the risk of colon cancer.
- Bacteria, such as coliform and *E. coli* can cause flu-like illnesses.
- Pesticides within well water can increase an individual's susceptibility to diseases, such as cancer.
- High levels of arsenic can affect the skin, nails, nervous system, circulatory system, and can cause an increased risk of certain cancers.
- Any level of lead within water can affect brain development, behavior, and the overall health of an individual.

Want to learn more? Join the Citizens Water Group every third Monday of each month at 2:00 PM. Check out the Wood County Meetings webpage for additional details regarding location and agenda items.





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