

## Why Do I Need to Get My Water Tested?



If you get your water from your own private well or small private group scheme, the only way to tell it is safe to drink is to have it tested in an accredited laboratory. No one else will alert you to the fact that it could be contaminated with chemicals. Nor will you get a boil notice from Irish Water if bugs have entered your supply.

If your private well or group scheme supplies more than 50 people or a commercial business (such as a crèche, hotel, restaurant or care home) you are legally required to have your water supply tested twice a year for microbial contamination.

Even if it is just your own family using the water, the EPA still recommends that you get your supply tested in an INAB accredited laboratory once every year for microbial contamination and once every three years for chemical contamination. You may need to have it tested sooner if you suspect it has become contaminated since your last test.

## What a drinking water test will tell you...

### Microbial Water Analysis Test Package

- Our microbial water analysis test package will tell if your water sample is contaminated by microorganisms (bugs), which can cause frequent stomach upsets, especially to children, the elderly, those with a weakened immune system or visitors to your home, who may not be used to drinking the water.
- The EPA estimates that between 15% and 30% of household wells are contaminated with a bacterium (bug) known as *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*).
- This bug can enter your water supply as a result of cattle grazing nearby, run-off from slurry spread on nearby land or runoff from an adjacent septic tank.



### Chemical Water Test Package

- Our chemicals test package will provide you with information such as whether part of your plumbing system may still contain lead (a risk in pre-1970s properties) or whether your drinking water may contain elevated levels of nitrite/nitrate, and/or other chemical contaminants that can have harmful health effects.
- It will explain why you might be having issues such as staining of sanitary ware. Blue/green is usually due to high copper levels, while red/brown staining may be due to elevated iron or manganese levels.
- The test will also put a value on the hardness of your water – or, on the other hand, its acidity – and potential to corrode your pipes and hot water tank.

