

Dept. of Natural Resources: Offering free well water screening at Farm Technology Days

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) today announced the department is once again providing free well screening for nitrate at Farm Technology Days July 12-14.

Nitrate is the most common health-related contaminant found in Wisconsin's groundwater. The DNR will offer free on-the-spot screening. Results will be available in only a few minutes. If you want to have your water screened, bring one cup of well water in any clean container to Booth 485.

“Statewide, about 10% of private wells may contain high levels of nitrate, and almost one-third of private well owners have never had their water tested for nitrate,” said Stacy Steinke, DNR Private Water Field Supervisor. “We typically see higher nitrate levels occur in areas with a larger agricultural presence or a concentration of septic systems. Everyone should avoid long-term nitrate consumption above the level of 10 parts per million. Areas with sandy soils or fractured bedrock near the surface can make areas more prone to groundwater contamination.”

Infants or pregnant women should not consume water with nitrate-nitrogen levels greater than 10 mg/L. DNR staff will be on hand to answer questions, and may recommend additional testing if elevated nitrate levels are detected.