

Safe Well Water RI

Trusted, expert information

Tip Sheet 28



Find Other Tip Sheets about well water problems and solutions here: www.riweltesting.org

Never owned a well?

Learn the basics. See Tip Sheet 1: [*Are you a smart well owner?*](#)

Need help? Contact us.

University of Rhode Island

(401) 874-5398

E-MAIL: ALYSON@URI.EDU

RI Department of Health Office of Drinking Water Quality

PRIVATE WELL PROGRAM

(401) 222-6867

E-MAIL: DOH.RIDWQ@HEALTH.RI.GOV

Buying a home with a private well? Test the water before you buy.

Rhode Island law about private well water protects your family's health and your investment.

What home buyers and sellers must do

Home buyers must:

- **Test the water** using licensed experts to collect, test, and interpret the water sample results. Water testing is done within 10 days after signing the Purchase and Sales Agreement, often as part of the home inspection. Ask your home inspector to use licensed experts to collect, test, and interpret water samples.
The law protects buyers *only* if you test the water before the closing – the final sale.
- **Pay for the water tests** listed on side 2.
- **Review the water test report** from a licensed expert who determines if water quality meets safety standards. The test report will also go to the Rhode Island Department of Health. You may choose to share results with the home seller.

Home sellers must:

- **Share any previous water test results** with buyers.
- **Allow a licensed expert** hired by the buyer to take water samples in the house for sale.

Be a smart home buyer

Clean, safe drinking water protects your family's health and your investment. The cost of testing is small – several hundred dollars – compared to the peace of mind you gain. It's one more step in buying a home, but it's not hard. Talk to your home inspector and insist they use **licensed** experts to collect, test, and interpret water samples.

See side 2 for the water tests you need and State-certified labs.



Required water tests for home sale

Alkalinity (as CaCO ₃)	Lead	Sulfate
Total Coliform & Escherichia coli	Manganese	Total Dissolved Solids
Hardness (as CaCO ₃)	Nitrate	Turbidity
Chloride	Nitrite	Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)
Fluoride	pH	MtBE
Iron	Specific Conductance	

The water test results will show you if the water is safe to drink and how it will affect the household plumbing over time. The results will also tell you if treatment is needed.

Other tests may be required. Contact the local building official at town hall to find out.

Where to Test: State-certified Water Testing Labs

BAL and ESS Labs

(401) 785-0241
185 Frances Avenue
Cranston, RI 02910
www.BallLaboratory.com

Microbac Laboratories

(800) 334-0103
61 Louisa Viens Drive
Dayville, CT 06241
www.microbac.com

New England Testing Lab, Inc.

(401) 353-3420
59 Greenhill Street
West Warwick, RI 02893
www.NewEnglandTesting.com

RI Analytical Labs

(401) 737-8500
41 Illinois Avenue
Warwick, RI 02888
www.RIAnalytical.com

State-certified water testing labs are current as of 3/2019. For updates see:
www.health.ri.gov/find/labs/privatewelltesting

We're here to help. Call us!

We are water quality experts who can give you accurate information at no cost. See who we are and how to reach us on side 1 and below.