#### What should I do if my well water is contaminated?

A well water professional should be consulted when you have a contaminated well. Visit wellowner.org to find a well water contractor.

Metals (such as arsenic and lead) and **Nitrates** can be removed from water by several methods, but installing a reverse osmosis **filtration system** is most common.

**Bacteria** (coliform and iron/sulfur bacteria) can be removed by full well disinfection.

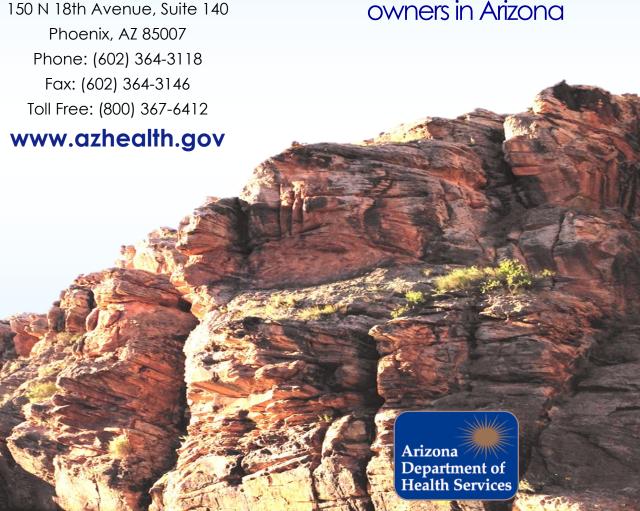
Radon can be removed by adding a granular activated carbon system or an air diffuser system. These need to be installed by a professional.

For any installed systems, make sure to follow all manufacturer maintenance schedules.

# **Protect Your** Health

a guide for **private well** 

owners in Arizona



Office of Environmental Health

## **GROUNDWATER**

supplies water to over 160,000 families in Arizona through private well systems.

Be aware of common groundwater contaminants in your area and get your well tested to protect your family from illness.

# What are the most common contaminants in Arizona groundwater?

# Lead & Arsenic

Lead and arsenic are naturally occurring metals, and mining regions tend to have higher amounts. Water filtered through metalrich rock can cause health is sues.

#### Nitrates Radon

Nitrate contamination is due to excess fertilizer or poor irrigation practices, or failing septic systems.



#### Dadon

Bacteria can enter

leaking septic

groundwater through

systems. In areas with

biofilms that coat wells.

high iron, iron-loving

bacteria can form

Radon is a natural gas that dissolves in groundwater and escapes in the atmosphere. If the gas gets trapped in a structure, it can exceed health standards.

**Groundwater contaminants** occur naturally in the environment, but some are the result of human activities, such as incorrect use of fertilizer, malfunctioning septic systems, resource extraction, or chemical spills.

Some may cause **potentially adverse health effects** depending on the concentration, composition of the contaminant, and the amount consumed.

Private well water is **not tested or regulated by any government organizations**, so it is up to individual owners to keep their drinking water safe.

# When should I get my well tested? What should I test for?

### All new wells

Arsenic and other primary metals, total coliform bacteria, nitrates, total dissolved solids,

### Once a year

Total coliform bacteria, nitrates, total dissolved solids, pH

### Every three years

Arsenic and other primary metals

## In addition to the schedule above, test your well when:

There are **known problems** with well water in your area.

If you have found a **high radon concentration** in your home (test the air in your home every 7-10 years), consider testing your water for radon.

You have experienced problems near your well (flooding, land disturbances, nearby waste disposal sites).

You notice a change in water quality (taste, color, odor).

If anyone in your family has an **unexplained** illness.

## Who can test my well water?

**Independent laboratories can perform these tests.** For a list of current laboratories that are certified for testing well-water samples, contact:

### Arizona Office of Licensure and Certification

Phone: (602) 364-0720 Email: <a href="mailto:envapp@azdhs.gov">envapp@azdhs.gov</a>

