

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**.

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



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH SERVICES

Protect Your Health

a guide for **private well** owners in Arizona

Office of Environmental Health

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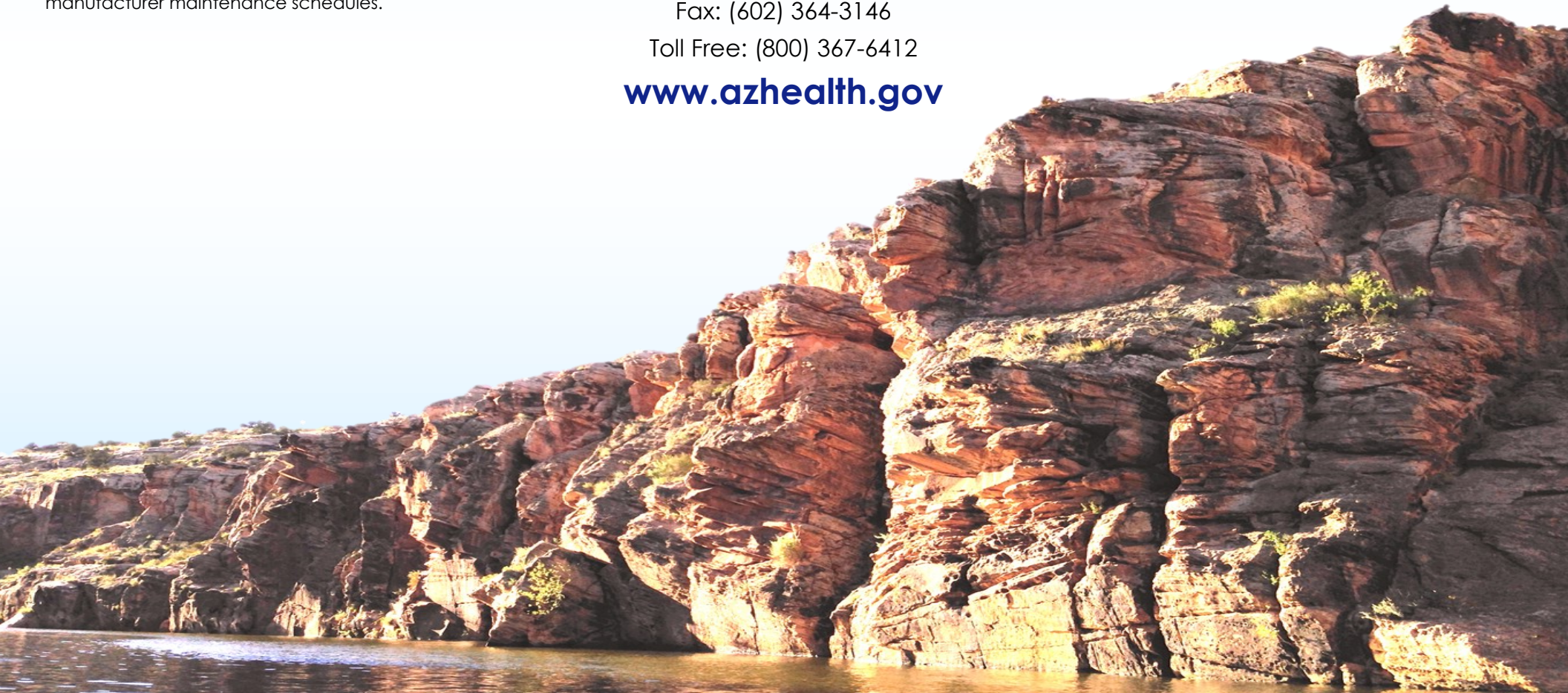
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GROUNDWATER

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?

Arsenic

Arsenic may be naturally present due to arsenic-containing rocks, which can leach into groundwater. High arsenic levels are found throughout Arizona.

Bacteria

Bacteria can be present due to a septic system leak or animal waste. Test water for “total coliform bacteria,” which will indicate the presence of bacteria that can harm human health.

Fluoride

Fluoride is present in most water sources from fluoride-rich minerals. It is particularly important to test your well water for fluoride if you have children.

Nitrates

Nitrates can be present due to agricultural activities, septic systems, or natural sources. It is particularly important to test your well water for nitrates if you have children.

Uranium

Uranium and other radioactive elements exist in groundwater. Uranium is one of the easiest and most inexpensive elements to test for in well water.

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, and 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	Once a Year	Every 5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arsenic• Bacteria (total coliform)• Fluoride• Lead• Nitrates• TDS*• Uranium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bacteria (total coliform)• Nitrates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arsenic• Fluoride• Uranium

*Total Dissolve Solids

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

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

You have experienced **problems near your well** (flooding, wildfire, 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 test the water from your private well.

For a list of current laboratories certified for testing water samples:

Visit <http://azhealth.gov/labs4h2o>
Or call (602) 364-0720

