

Understanding Your Water Quality Test Results

Canada has set Maximum Acceptable Concentrations (MACs) under the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality. If your report is flagged as **X Maximum Acceptable Concentration (MAC)** it means that one or both of the parameters listed has exceeded the MAC and action is required. The following information provides further details on the parameters and the actions that should be taken.

Parameter	E.coli
Acceptable Level	Should not be detected in a water sample at any level.
What is it?	E. coli (<i>Escherichia coli</i>) is a type of bacteria found only in the intestines of mammals, including humans. The presence of E. coli indicates your water supply has recently been in contact with fecal matter.
Could it affect my health?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>E. coli presence in drinking water indicates a serious and immediate risk to health.</u> • Illness may be caused by E. coli and by other types of harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites and other microorganisms that are also often present in sewage or fecal matter. • The most common symptoms include nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Infants, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems may suffer more severe effects.
What should I do?	<p>Immediate Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STOP DRINKING THE WATER • Health Protection Services will be contacting you at the number you provided regarding next steps. If you do not hear from them, call the office nearest to you at the numbers provided in this document. • Water that is used for drinking or preparing food, juices or ice cubes, or brushing teeth, should be held at a rolling boil for 1 minute. Water can be boiled ahead of time, cooled and then stored in clean covered containers, or another safe source of water can be used (e.g. bottled water). • Continue boiling water that is used for infant formula preparation for 2 minutes as per manufacturer's instructions or ready-to-feed formula should be used. • The water can be used for showers, baths or washing without boiling provided that the water is not swallowed. Toddlers and infants should be sponge bathed. • Water does not need to be boiled for hand or machine washing of dishes and laundry. • Continue to boil the water until the water quality problem is resolved. <p>Additional Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspect the water supply and repair any problems. Check distances between the water supply and sources of contamination. Determine if there is a source of E.coli near your water supply, such as a malfunctioning septic system. A licensed well driller may be able to help you with this. • Chlorinate the well and plumbing system (see further information for details on <i>How To Chlorinate Your Well Water</i>). • Retest to confirm acceptable water quality. Two (2) consecutive samples, taken at least 24 hours apart, showing zero (0) Total coliforms and E. coli are required to confirm the safety of your water. • In some cases, a water treatment device may be needed to fix persistent problems.
How did it get into my water supply?	<p>Common sources of E.coli in water supply originate from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface water getting into a well (through natural processes, aging or poorly constructed wells). • Your water supply may be a <u>dug well or spring</u> which is in contact with surface or shallow water. <u>These water supplies are not considered as a secure water source, and water treatment is recommended.</u>
Further Information	If you required further assistance, please contact your regional Health Protection Services office to discuss your water results. How to Chlorinate You Well Water

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Parameter	Total Coliforms
Acceptable Level	Should not be detected in a water sample at any level.
What is it?	Total coliform are bacteria that are commonly found in the environment, in soil or vegetation.
Could it affect my health?	Total coliform bacteria are not likely to cause illness, but their presence indicates that other more harmful microorganisms may enter the water supply. Their presence can indicate that something is not staying clean in the water supply or in the plumbing system that needs to be corrected.
What should I do?	<p>Immediate Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOIL YOUR WATER • Water that is used for drinking or preparing food, juices or ice cubes, or brushing teeth, should be held at a rolling boil for 1 minute. Water can be boiled ahead of time, cooled and then stored in clean covered containers, or another safe source of water can be used (e.g. bottled water). • Continue boiling water that is used for infant formula preparation for 2 minutes as per manufacturer`s instructions or ready-to-feed formula should be used. • The water can be used for showers, baths or washing without boiling provided that the water is not swallowed. Toddlers and infants should be sponge bathed. • Water does not need to be boiled for hand or machine washing of dishes and laundry. • Continue to boil the water until the water quality problem is resolved. <p>Additional Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspect the water supply and repair any problems. Check distances between wells and sources of contamination. Determine if there is a source of bacteria near your water supply, such as a malfunctioning septic system. A licensed well driller may be able to help you with this. • Chlorinate the well and plumbing system (see further information for details on <i>How To Chlorinate Your Well Water</i>). • Retest the water. 1 sample showing zero (0) Total coliforms and E. coli is required to confirm the safety of your water. An additional test should be taken after 3-4 months to ensure that the contamination has not recurred. • In some cases, a water treatment device may be needed to fix persistent problems.
How did it get into my water supply?	Common sources of total coliforms in water supply originate from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface water getting into the well (through natural processes, aging or poorly constructed wells). • Stagnant water within a well and plumbing system that has not been used for a prolonged period of time (e.g. seasonal cottage). • Your water supply may be a <u>dug well or spring</u> which is in contact with surface or shallow water. <u>These water sources are not considered as a secure water source, and water treatment is recommended.</u>
Further Information	If you required further assistance, please contact your regional Health Protection Services office to discuss your water results. How to Chlorinate You Well Water

Health Protection Services Contact Information

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(506) 549-5550

Edmundston
(506) 737-4400

Miramichi
(506) 778-6765

Saint John
(506) 658-3022

Sussex
(506) 432-2104

Campbellton
(506) 789-2549

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(506) 453-2830

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St. Stephen
(506) 466-7615

Tracadie
(506) 394-4728

Caraquet
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