



Frequently asked questions

How do I get my water tested?

The first step is to decide what you want your water tested for. Refer to our [Residential Service Guide](#) for a list of common tests.

Once you identify what tests you want performed, you can pick up the appropriate sampling supplies from our lab at 143-111 Research Drive in Saskatoon or call 1-800-240-8808 or [email us](#) and we can arrange to ship the supplies to you.

I have a sterilized jar or an older test kit from another lab. Can I use it to bring water to you?

It depends on what you want your water tested for. For instance, bacteria analysis requires a sterile container. Any bottle provided by the client cannot be guaranteed to be sterile, so the lab test cannot distinguish whether the water contains the bacteria or if the container itself was contaminated.

Other labs may perform testing differently than SRC and their bottles and/or preservatives may not be appropriate for testing at SRC. Our lab may not be able to perform the tests you require with bottles other than our own.

It is always best to obtain the appropriate bottles from our lab before taking your sample. Call 1-800-240-8808 or [email us](#) and we'll send you sampling supplies.

I think my water is giving me a rash!

Rashes can be caused by a range of issues, which may or may not be related to your water. Consult a medical professional to determine if a specific pathogen(s) or contaminant(s) is the source of your rash.

If water testing is required, call 1-800-240-8808 or [email us](#) for instructions and sampling supplies.

How often should I test my well water for potability?

We recommend testing your well water at least annually for potability. Shallow wells are more prone to contamination and should be tested more frequently.



Testing is also recommended in unusual events or situations, such as heavy rains, flooding or after a drought.

If you are considering purchasing a new home or have added a well to your property, you should consider testing your well to ensure the water is safe for use.

I just purchased a cabin. How do I test my water to see if it is safe to drink?

Well water used at cabins or cottages should be routinely tested for potability. Shallow sand-point wells that are often used at cabins are readily susceptible to contamination.

Similarly, if lake water is used directly, bacterial contamination of the water is expected. In these cases, an additional treatment system to help ensure the safety of the drinking water is necessary. Ongoing maintenance of the treatment system, as recommended by supplier/manufacturer, along with routine (at least annual) testing of the treated water is recommended to ensure the treatment system remains effective.

I would like to get some well water tests to understand its suitability for use in garden and field irrigation.

Our *Greenhouse Package* provides a number of parameters that can be used to assess the suitability of water for irrigation, including concentrations of various plant nutrients and micro-nutrients.

Our *Spray Water Suitability* package provides a number of parameters that can be used to assess if a water is suitable to use for dilution and application of fertilizers or herbicides in a mechanical sprayer.

View our [Residential Services Guide](#) for more information or call 1-800-240-8808 or [email us](#) and we can provide a quote, instructions and sampling supplies.

I would like to test my well water for radon. How do I go about doing this?

Sampling for radon in water requires special containers and an appropriate sample handling process. Please contact us at 1-800-240-8808 or [email us](#) to obtain the necessary sampling supplies and detailed sampling instructions.



My well water smells like rotten eggs. What should I test for?

Well water can become contaminated with sulfur-reducing bacteria that can ultimately lead to the presence of hydrogen sulfide gas, which has a distinctive rotten egg smell.

Shock chlorination of the well is often an effective treatment to control or eliminate the bacteria and associated odour. View our Well Water Testing Packages in our [Resident Service Guide](#) and call 1-800-240-8808 or [email us](#) instructions and sampling supplies.

I want to get a water treatment system for my well water. What system should I get?

Although we cannot recommend a system, we can help you with the baseline testing used by system suppliers to determine which system would be best suit your needs.

View the Water Quality Packages in our [Residential Service Guide](#) and call 1-800-240-8808 or [email us](#) for instructions and sampling supplies.

I have a water treatment system in my house, but I would like to test my water. Is it best to test the well water or the water going through the system?

It is best to test the water at the point of use.

- If you are using the water from the water taps inside your residence, you would test this water.
- If the water is being pumped directly from the well for such use as irrigation or livestock watering, you would test this water. Testing both the well water and point of use water can indicate if the treatment system is functioning appropriately.

Call 1-800-240-8808 or [email us](#) and we can provide instructions and sampling supplies.

I want to see if my lake/dugout/slough is safe to swim in. What should I test for?

Numerous parameters can impact the safe, recreational use of various surface waters. The [Guidelines for Canadian Recreational Water Quality](#) published by Health Canada provide a good overview of this topic.

Specific regulations related to recreational water quality fall under provincial jurisdiction. Saskatchewan has published [Surface Water Quality Objectives](#) that list limits for various parameters for Recreation and Aesthetics.



If you'd like to test your water to be sure it's safe for use, call 1-800-240-8808 or [email us](#) for instructions and sampling supplies.

I live in an older neighbourhood that may have lead pipes. How do I get my water tested for lead?

Health Canada has developed a specific sampling and testing procedure for lead in drinking water, so stop by our lab at 143-111 Research Drive in Saskatoon and pick up the appropriate sampling supplies. We will provide you with instructions on how to take the sample.

If you do not live in or near Saskatoon, call 1-800-240-8808 or [email us](#) and we will arrange to ship the supplies to you.

My hot water smells like rotten eggs. What should I test for?

Sometimes the anode used in a hot water heater will increase sulfate levels in the water, supporting the growth of sulfate-reducing bacteria, especially in a hot water environment.

Replacing the anode may be necessary along with cleaning and flushing the hot water tank.

If you'd like to test your water to be sure it's safe for use, call 1-800-240-8808 or [email us](#) for instructions and sampling supplies.