

Private drinking water wells inspections, permitting, and water sampling are conducted by TRHD environmental health staff.

**Useful Link:**

[NC DHHS DPH EHS Onsite Water Protection Branch](#)

**Frequently Asked Questions:**

**How do I get a well permit? What are the steps after the well permit is issued?**

*Step 1: Fill out a well permit application at your local health department or download and complete the [electronic version](#).*

*Step 2: Meet with an environmental health specialist on your property to determine the suitability of your proposed well location.*

*Step 3: If a suitable location is available, the environmental health specialist will issue a permit for the well. This permit may be picked up by the applicant at the health department. The permit can also be mailed, faxed, or emailed to the applicant and/or their selected well driller(s).*

*Step 4: The driller will contact an environmental health specialist for the environmental health specialist to perform a grouting inspection. This occurs during the drilling process, to insure that the well meets the Well Construction Standards for private drinking water wells.*

*Step 5: Once the certified pump installer or property owner installs the pump, the applicant must contact the local health department so that an environmental health specialist may inspect the completion of the well head and collect a water sample.*

*Step 6: Your water sample is sent to the NC State Laboratory of Public Health (NCSLPH). NCSLPH analyzes your samples and sends the results to your local health department. This information is reviewed by an environmental health specialist and mailed to the address you specified on your application. The elapsed time from sampling to results being mailed to the applicant is typically 6 – 8 weeks.*

**How long are well or septic permits valid?**

*Well and septic permits are typically valid for five years from the date of issuance. If you would like to know the expiration date of a specific permit, please contact your local health department.*

**How do I find septic or well records?**

*You may visit your local health department during business hours, or you can fill out [a septic/well lookup request](#) and fax or mail it to your local health department.*

**How can I get my drinking water sampled?**

*You may visit your local health department during normal business hours to fill out an application for water sampling or download and complete the [electronic version](#). After we receive your application and payment for requested samples, an environmental health specialist call to schedule an appointment to collect your sample(s).*

**What can you test for in drinking water?**

*We routinely test for bacteria, inorganic chemicals, nitrates/nitrites, pesticides, herbicides, and petroleum products. Detailed information about each type of sample is below.*

**Bacterial testing:** *we test for the presence of total and fecal coliform bacteria in drinking water using Colilert Present/Absent analysis. This is a qualitative test that results in a negative or positive result for total and fecal coliform bacteria. If coliform bacteria are present, the water is considered unsafe for drinking purposes. An analysis refers only to the sample as collected and should not be regarded as a complete report on the water supply. Water is not examined for pathogenic bacteria, as the prospect of isolating them from water is very remote. Water samples sent to the NC State Laboratory for Public Health are available from the [NCSLPH website](#).*

**Inorganic Chemical Testing:** *These samples are analyzed for alkalinity, arsenic, calcium, chloride, copper, hardness, lead, iron, magnesium, manganese, pH, fluoride, and zinc. If you have concerns about other inorganic chemicals, we can additionally analyze for cadmium, chromium, mercury, selenium, silver, barium, sulfate, dissolved solids, and turbidity at no additional cost. If you wish for use to test for these optional chemicals, please note it on*

*your water sample application. If you would like to sample for an inorganic chemical or physical property that is not list, please ask. We can sometimes make arrangements for such samples. Inorganic chemical samples are analyzed by the NC State Laboratory for Public Health. Results are typically available 2 – 5 weeks after your sample is collected. Inorganic water sample results are available from the [NCSLPH website](#).*

***Pesticides:*** *These samples are collected after special arrangements are made with your local health department. We must know the pesticide(s) for which you want your water analyzed. Due to the complexity and cost associated with organic chemical analysis, we are not able to do broad-spectrum testing for pesticides. After you inform us of the pesticide(s) you wish to test for, we will contact the NC State Laboratory for Public Health to arrange for testing. These samples are analyzed by the NC State Laboratory for Public Health. Results are typically available 2 – 5 weeks after your sample is collected*

***Herbicides:*** *These samples are collected after special arrangements are made with your local health department. We must know the herbicide(s) for which you want your water analyzed. Due to the complexity and cost associated with organic chemical analysis, we are not able to do broad-spectrum testing for herbicides. After you inform us of the herbicide(s) you wish to test for, we will contact the NC State Laboratory for Public Health to arrange for testing. These samples are analyzed by the NC State Laboratory for Public Health. Results are typically available 2 – 5 weeks after your sample is collected*

***Petroleum Products:*** *These samples are collected after special arrangements are made with your local health department. We must know the petroleum product(s) for which you want your water analyzed. Due to the complexity and cost associated with organic chemical analysis, we are not able to do broad-spectrum testing for petroleum products. After you inform us of the petroleum product(s) you wish to test for, we will contact the NC State Laboratory for Public Health to arrange for testing. These samples are analyzed by the NC State Laboratory for Public Health. Results are typically available 2 – 5 weeks after your sample is collected.*

#### **Applicable Rules:**

[North Carolina Public Health Law G.S. 130A](#)  
[Well Laws and Rules – Environmental Health Section](#)

#### **Forms:**

[TRHD Well Application](#)  
[TRHD Septic/Well Lookup Request](#)

*A List of certified well drillers and pump installers can be found at the [North Carolina Well Contractors Certification website](#).*

If you have additional questions about private drinking water wells inspections, permitting, and water sampling, please contact your local health department.