

## New Jersey Private Well Testing Act (NJ PWTA)

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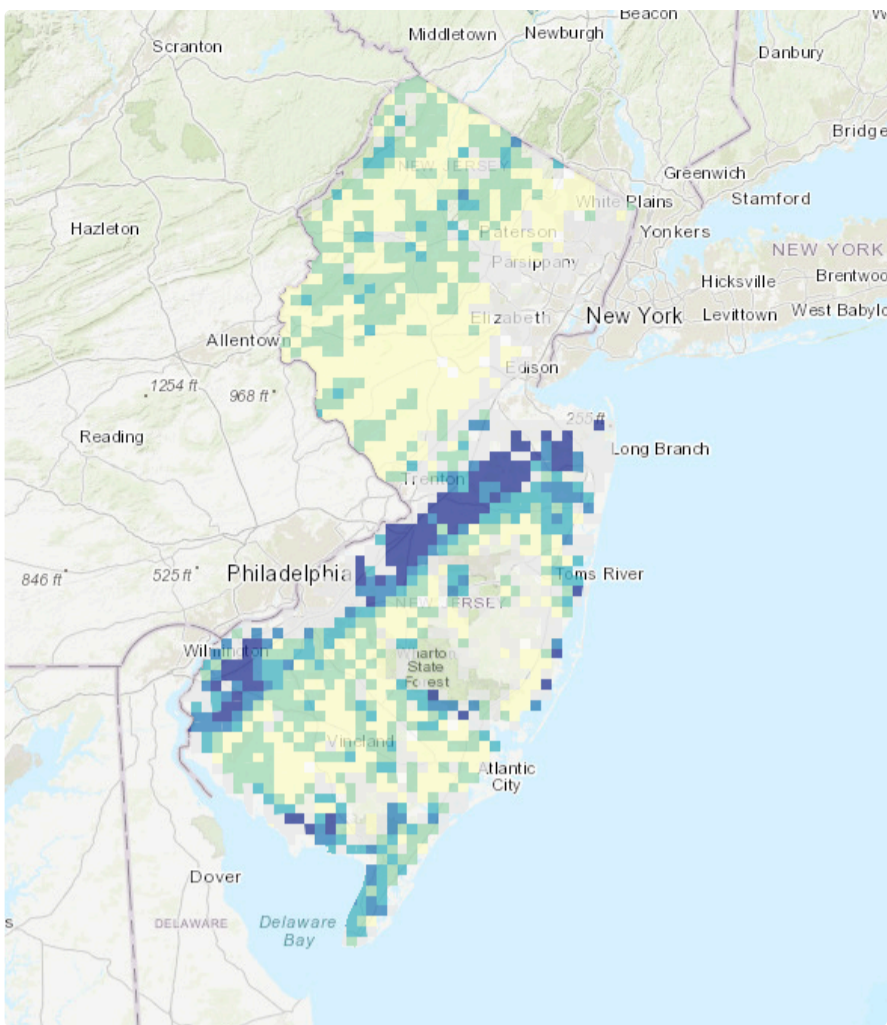
In March 2001, the New Jersey Private Well Testing Act (PWTA) was signed into law, and its regulations went into effect in September 2002. The PWTA is a consumer information law that requires sellers (or buyers) of property with potable wells in New Jersey to test the **untreated groundwater for up to 43 parameters**. Those test results must be reviewed by both parties prior to the closing the of title. **Landlords are also required to test their well water once every five years** and to provide each tenant with a copy of the test results. The test results are submitted by the certified laboratory to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). The results are also sent by the DEP to the local health authorities.

Approximately 25% of the wells in the State have been tested under this Act. Several [online interactive maps](#) were created to summarize PWTA data. These maps are intended to provide information to homeowners about potential risks in their area. Homeowners with private wells are encouraged to routinely test their wells. Please review our [well testing page](#) for more information.

NJDEP regulates the construction of private wells. A newly constructed well is tested once for the presence of the contaminants regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act. Post construction regulation of private wells is the responsibility of the local health department.

[Private Well Testing Act, N.J.S.A. 58:12A-26 et seq.](#)

[Private Well Testing Act, N.J.A.C. 7:9E et seq. \(regulations\)](#)



Iron concentrations of ground water using NJ PWT data. Please click the map image to visit our online interactive maps for more contaminants.



## NJ Private Well Testing Act FAQs

### Background/Basics

#### What does the New Jersey Private Well Testing Act, N.J.S.A. 58:12A-26 et seq. (PWT) require?

The PWT is a law that went into effect on September 14, 2002. The law requires that when property with certain types of drinking water wells are sold or leased, the well water must be tested for specific contaminants. The water test results must be reviewed by both the buyer and seller, or in the case of a leased property, by the lessee. If the well is only used for purposes other than drinking water, such as watering the lawn, then the well does not have to be tested under this Act.

#### When is testing required?

The Private Well Testing Act requires the testing under the following conditions:

- Sale of any property that obtains its drinking water from a private well located on the property, including new construction properties
- Sale of any property that obtains its drinking water from a well that has less than 15 service connections or that does not regularly serve an average of at least 25 people daily at least 60 days out of each year
- Leasing of any property that obtains its drinking water from a private well that isn't required to be tested under to any other State law (must be completed every five years)

#### When in the real estate sales process does testing have to happen?

The Act requires the following:

- Every contract of sale for a property subject to the Act must include a provision requiring the testing as a condition of the sale
- A closing of the title for sale on a real property that is subject to the Act may not occur unless both the buyer and seller have received and reviewed a copy of the water test results, and have signed a paper certifying that they have received and reviewed a copy of the results
- Every time a rental property subject to the Act is leased, a written copy of the most recent test results must be given to the lessee

#### How much will the testing cost?

Laboratory testing rates vary, depending on how difficult it is to collect the sample, the location of the property in relation to the lab, and required parameters. The NJDEP estimates that the average price is between \$1,200-\$1,500. There may be additional costs based on whether it is necessary to analyze the field blank that is collected with the sample, which is required for PFAS and VOCs. This verifies that contaminants have not been accidentally introduced into the sample.

#### What will happen if the testing is not completed?

Testing of your well water is important for your family's health. If testing is not done, you and your family may be subject to potential health risks and not know it. You may also be subject to **enforcement action**.

#### Will the lab notify me if my water is safe to drink?

The laboratory is required to report the test results to the individual who requested the test. The [reporting form](#), provided by the NJDEP, will show how the well water results compare with State and Federal drinking water standards. NJ PWT standards can be found [here](#). All NJ drinking water standards can be found [here](#).

#### Where can I find a list of New Jersey certified drinking water laboratories?

A list of New Jersey DEP certified drinking water laboratories that conduct PWT testing can be found [here](#).

# What are the meanings of the terms MCL, Action Level, and recommended upper limit regarding Safe Drinking Water Standards?

**MCL** (Maximum Contaminant Level): the maximum level of a primary contaminant that is allowed in drinking water in accordance with the Safe Drinking Water Act and corresponding regulations.

**Action levels:** concentrations of certain primary contaminants (i.e., lead and copper) in drinking water at which treatment requirements may be initiated by the Federal Safe Drinking Water Regulations.

**Recommended upper limit:** the optimal range for secondary contaminants (i.e., iron, manganese, and pH) in accordance with the New Jersey Safe Drinking Water Regulations.

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Last Update: December 8th, 2023