

Information Sources for Water Well Owners

This article provides some online resources where water well owners can access information about their water well or regional groundwater resources.



Current Groundwater Levels

Groundwater that supplies a water well is an invisible resource. Most well owners cannot easily determine the level of groundwater in their water well to determine if they are in danger of running out of water, especially during droughts. The U.S. Geological Survey has created a [network of groundwater monitoring wells](#) across the state where well owners can easily determine the current status of groundwater in each county of the state. The 30-day graphs for any county provide color-coded graphs that allow for easy determination of groundwater levels ranging from "normal" levels in green to "emergency" low levels in red over many months. The real-time graphs also provide up-to-date water levels in each county monitoring well.

Search for a Water Well Log

A water well completion report or "well log" provides information about a specific water well. A well log is completed for each water well when it is drilled and a copy is submitted to the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Many well logs, especially from water wells drilled over the past 20 years, are accessible online through the [Pennsylvania Groundwater Information System](#). Simply complete as much of the online form as you can or switch to the Map search and type in an address and click on "View Items Below" to see well logs that meet your search criteria. You can select individual well logs to view the information in the log such as the well depth, driller and other important information.

Find a State Accredited Water Lab

Testing drinking water is a complex task that requires specialized equipment and trained personnel. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has a [Laboratory Accreditation Program](#) that certifies commercial water testing labs to ensure that they are following proper procedures and providing accurate test results. If you are interested in having your water tested, visit the link above and scroll down the page to find the Quick-Reference Accredited Drinking Water Laboratories List where you can download a spreadsheet that lists currently accredited water labs by county.

Penn State Drinking Water Testing

The Penn State Agricultural Analytical Services Laboratory (AASL) is a DEP-accredited water testing lab that offers a [Drinking Water Testing Program](#) through kits that are mailed to the lab. The kits can be picked up at most Penn State Extension county offices or by contacting the lab directly. The drinking water program provides fee-based testing for many common drinking water pollutants found in Pennsylvania groundwater.



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Groundwater Quality Statistics by County

Water well owners often wonder what pollutants or other parameters they should test in their drinking water. An excellent source of information to help guide these decisions is groundwater quality data from other water wells in each county. The Penn State Agricultural Analytical Services Lab publishes a [groundwater summary](#) of water test results for each county which is updated annually. Included in the summary are the number of water samples tested and the number that failed drinking water standards for each water test parameter.

How to Interpret a Water Test Report

Well owners who receive a water test report often have questions about how to interpret the results. Penn State Extension created the [Drinking Water Interpretation Tool](#) or "DWIT" to provide online interpretation of water test results. Simply enter the numbers from your water test report into the appropriate box on the form and click "submit" at the bottom of the form to receive an interpretation along with links to other relevant online resources.

How to Find a Local Water Well Driller

Well owners frequently seek out water well contractors or drillers to make needed repairs or to drill a new well. Local drillers may also be able to provide a copy of your water well completion report if they originally drilled the well and retained a copy of the report. You can find a listing of local water well contractors who are members of the National Ground Water Association (NGWA) by accessing the [How to Find a Contractor](#) tool on the NGWA website.

An Example Water Well Construction Ordinance

Pennsylvania currently lacks statewide construction standards for private water wells. In some parts of the state, counties or townships have enacted local ordinances requiring location and construction standards for water wells. Well owners or Master Well Owner volunteers who are interested in obtaining a model ordinance that could be used as a template for a local ordinance can access the [Chester County Water Well Ordinance](#).

Penn State Extension Water Specialists

Penn State Extension has several water specialists with experience related to the location, construction, maintenance, testing and treatment of private water supplies. You can find local Penn State Extension water experts through our online directory.

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