

CCO's WATER WELL MONITORING

Concerned Citizens Ohio provides a free "neighbors helping neighbors" monthly water monitoring program---the Shalersville branch, on the first Sunday of each month (call 330-626-5223 for more information) and the Hiram branch (call 330-569-7863) on the fourth Monday of each month. Adjustments are made for holidays. For those water well owners who use this service regularly, the chloride and conductance measurements we test for can reveal changes in your water such as possible contamination from a nearby oil or gas well entering your aquifer. Comparing results over a number of months, you can see sudden spikes.

CCO water testers are Portage County residents who have been trained by the Sierra Club. We use meters and testing methods donated by the Sierra Club Water Sentinel Program. This is NOT a substitute for a Tier III water test by an EPA certified lab and does NOT test for bacterial contamination.

Collect your sample in a wide-mouth glass jar, as close to the well as possible---but before any water treatment and after you have run the cold water for about 10 minutes to clear any water that has been sitting in the pipes. Preferably collect your sample within about an hour before coming. Encourage your neighbors to join our water monitoring program, as wider testing will increase our ability to track and identify possible disturbances in area water quality in neighborhoods around Portage County.

WHO WE ARE

We are a grassroots group of Ohio residents, largely based in Portage County, and networked with similar groups across Ohio and other states---wherever citizens are concerned about fossil fuel extraction and the lack of local control.

We have two groups in Portage County that meet regularly---one based in Shalersville and one based in Hiram. We're also forming groups in other parts of Portage County. We're networked across Ohio. Email or phone us and we'll give you information about our meetings, or tell you how to form a group in your part of Portage.

We can put you on an email list for notification of public meetings or information related to oil and gas or news and more general information about energy and related issues.

We welcome all our neighbors, in urban or rural neighborhoods---whether you want more information, own your mineral rights, have leased your land or your mineral rights were leased a long time ago. We can notify you about public meetings. We can try to answer your questions. We can notify you about news that does not make it to the mainstream media.

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Your Water Well



Concerned Citizens Ohio





KEEP YOUR DRINKING WATER WELL SAFE:

(1) Go to the Ohio EPA website and look for your water well log. (<http://www.epa.ohio.gov/portals/0/general%20pdfs/waterwellsampling.pdf>)

(2) Keep a note book or folder with all information about your water well.

Every couple of years have your water well tested for bacterial contamination.

(3) If you anticipate gas or oil well drilling in your area, have one to three Tier III test done---in spring, late summer, and fall---for the chemicals that might indicate some contamination from gas or oil well drilling.

(4) Even if no new drilling is anticipated, if you have an old oil or gas well, tanks, or transmission pipes close to your water well, you might also want to get a Tier III test done in case the old well or tanks have leaked.

(5) Seek professional advice if any of the measured chemicals in your water well are very high.

OHIO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends water well testing for bacteria every year or two. Further, their web site provides this information:

“Water samples must be collected and analyzed using proper sampling and labora-

tory protocols and methods and careful documentation of sample chain of custody. Some labs will come and collect the sample for you; others will only provide the sample containers. Some local health districts or soil and water conservation offices offer sample collection and coordinate with labs for sample analysis. For best results, use a qualified professional to ensure proper collection of your water sample. Improper sampling can result in unreliable data and waste your money.”

“Water sampling should be done only by a professional who is familiar with all sampling and laboratory protocols. To ensure that nothing has contaminated the sample, a professional will carefully record all information to provide a “chain of custody” between collection of the sample and the actual laboratory testing.”

EPA certification is given for methods used for particular chemical parameters to be tested. You must make sure the laboratory you use is certified for the particular tests you want done.

Without attention to these details, water analyses will be of little or no value in an oil and gas water contamination investigation or a legal proceeding.

BEFORE YOU CHOOSE A LABORATORY, READ THE FINE PRINT. ASK QUESTIONS:

(1) Laboratory Certification is done by NELAP (National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program) or AALA (American Association for Laboratory Accreditation). When choosing a lab, ask for accreditation information, including how recently the accreditation was obtained.

(2) The Environmental Protection Agency accredits laboratories for their methods of analyzing specific chemicals or specific test methods. Make sure the lab is certified for the chemicals you want tested.

(3) Many labs will NOT represent you in legal proceedings if you believe that industrial activity (such as horizontal shale gas well drilling or spills) near you has taken place. Before you choose a lab, you should know if they will testify.

(4) Ask whether the lab also works for oil and gas companies. While this may not be a problem, you should have this information before you make your decision.

(5) Some lab results include explanations, while others simply supply you with the results, with no explanation or comparison standards. If your lab results lacks understandable explanations or comparison numbers, check out this web site: (<http://extension.psu.edu/natural-resources/water/webinar-series/past-webinars/interpreting-pre-and-post-gas-drilling-water-test-reports>).

