

## How do I become eligible to have a nitrate treatment system installed?

If you meet one of the two following criteria, you may be eligible for further evaluation of having a nitrate treatment system being installed:

### **For wells serving infants (<1yr) or a person that is pregnant:**

- An initial nitrate test from this program was at or above 10 mg/L nitrate and;
- A confirmation test results in the average nitrate level being at or above 10 mg/L.

### **For wells serving the general population:**

- The initial nitrate test from this program is in at or above 10 mg/L nitrate and;
- A confirmation test results in the the average nitrate level being at or above 10 mg/L.

Wells with an existing functional RO system are **NOT** eligible.



## What is the process to have a treatment system installed if I am eligible?

- If eligible, your well results and nitrate situation will be evaluated to determine if a nitrate treatment system, such as reverse osmosis (RO) will be feasible for your situation.
- If your well is determined to meet standards for an RO system installation under this program, you will be provided with a list of approved local RO installation contractors to contact for a price quote.
  - After the quote of services is approved, the RO system will be installed and verified as functioning properly
- Guidance on operation and long-term maintenance of the RO system will be provided

**NOTE:** If nitrates are excessively high, the installation of a reverse osmosis treatment system may not be the most feasible way to reduce nitrate exposure. Program Staff will work closely with these situations to determine if there are other more feasible treatment options, alternative water supply options or replacement well options. Funding for non-traditional treatment methods or well replacement is not available under this program and would require other funding sources or additional county board approval.



# Rock County Nitrate Well Testing and Mitigation Program



## What is the issue with nitrates in drinking water?

- Elevated nitrates in our groundwater present a potential health hazard, especially to infants and to the developing fetus during a pregnancy. High nitrates may also increase the risk of thyroid disease, diabetes, and certain types of cancer.
- Nitrates are present naturally in our groundwater in low levels (<1 mg/L) but can be elevated due to leaching of nutrients from fertilizer applications, animal waste, or septic system.
- In Rock County, approximately 25% of tested private wells typically exceed the health advisory level of 10 mg/liter nitrates.



Nitrate can cause blue baby syndrome. This can affect infants less than 6 months old.



Nitrate can cause thyroid disease. This can affect everyone.

## What does this program provide?

The Rock County Board of Supervisors approved funding in 2022 to test for nitrates at no charge in private wells of residential properties that meet certain qualifications. In addition, if testing results indicate high levels of nitrates, the well may be eligible for confirmation testing and additional funding for potential installation of a nitrate point-of-use treatment system if you do currently have a treatment system.



Nitrate may cause birth defects.

This can affect women who are or may become pregnant.



## Who qualifies for nitrate testing?

Private wells with the following qualifications may be eligible for free nitrate testing under this program:

**The well serves a 1-2 family dwelling that is owner occupied or rented and;**

- **There is an infant less than 1 year of age present in the home, or**
- **There is a pregnancy in the home, or**
- **There is a record of a previous nitrate test on record greater than 10 mg/L**

A free Nitrate test kit can be picked up at the **Rock County Public Health Department**  
3328 US Hwy 51 N, Janesville

Levels of nitrate-nitrogen over 10 mg/L can be harmful.



Nitrate may increase the risk of certain kinds of cancer. This can affect everyone.