

# DELAWARE'S DRINKING WATER

*What do you know about the water your family is drinking?*



## WATER SOURCES

Depending on where you live in Delaware, your drinking water comes from either surface water (such as rivers) or groundwater (from the underground aquifer). Protecting these water sources from contamination will protect your health.

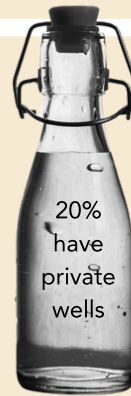
If you pay a water bill, a private or publicly owned utility tests, treats, and distributes your water.

If you don't, your tap water comes from a private well—which is up to you (or your landlord) to test, treat, and maintain for safety.

## DRINKING WATER IMPACTS

Contaminated drinking water is a problem for some communities in Delaware, some of which have dealt with "forever chemicals" called PFAS and unsafe levels of nitrates. In some places, particularly in Sussex County, high nitrates in groundwater are common.

High nitrates in drinking water can lead to health problems, which is why regulated utilities are required to address contaminants such as nitrates. The owners of private wells must do their own testing to determine risks.



Private wells are susceptible to pollutants such as bacteria and nitrate contamination from agricultural activities and on-site septic systems. Septic systems must be regularly maintained for human and environmental health.

If you have a well, it is recommended to get your water tested through private or in-state labs.

## WATER TESTING

The Delaware Office of Drinking Water offers affordable testing kits (\$4) to ensure your well water is safe for you and your family. Kits are available for pick-up at locations in Georgetown, Dover, Smyrna, and Newark.

For more testing information, go to [www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/lab/privdw.html](http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/lab/privdw.html) or call 302-741-8630.



# The Clean Water Campaign advocates for solutions

The Clean Water Campaign is a statewide effort to secure funding to safeguard Delaware's water. Funding will support:

- Improvements to wastewater treatment systems
- Improvements to drinking water treatment systems
- Flood reduction and drainage control projects
- Innovative toxic removal technologies
- Efforts to protect water quality, such as using cover crops or planting trees along waterways to filter pollution or capture excess nutrients

Experts estimate Delaware faces a

## \$100 MILLION

annual shortfall for clean water projects. Funding is essential to ensure that we have clean water, for the sake of our public health, for the environment, and Delaware's economy.

## A PROPOSED SOLUTION

A bill called the "Clean Water for Delaware Act" (House Bill 200) would create a Delaware Clean Water Trust Fund to support eligible clean water projects, including drinking water. If approved, the bill would:

- Set minimum funding levels for loans and grants for clean water projects benefiting underserved or low-income communities
- Develop a strategic plan for all drinking water, regardless of source
- Ensure funding for existing programs (e.g., Delaware Safe Drinking Water Revolving Fund)

We ask the General Assembly to make an initial investment of

## \$50 MILLION

into the Clean Water Trust Fund THIS YEAR.

To learn more and to take action, go to [cleanwaterdelaware.org](http://cleanwaterdelaware.org).

*Your support has never been more important. Contact your local legislator to voice your support for the Clean Water for Delaware Act in 2021.*

*To find your state lawmaker and their contact information, go to [inlandbays.org/clean-water-campaign](http://inlandbays.org/clean-water-campaign).*

DELAWARE CENTER FOR THE  
**INLAND BAYS**  
Research. Educate. Restore.

