

## ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT YOUR WELL WATER?

Industrial activities like gas drilling can pollute water in nearby homes. The suggestions provided here will help you assess the quality of your water and detect contamination if it has occurred. Even if you've had your water tested in the past, it's a good idea to keep monitoring.

Here are **3 Good Things to Do** to protect your water and your health

### 1 Monitor Your Water

**Monitor your water daily or weekly for changes in TDS.** With an inexpensive meter you can check for changes in water quality. In Pennsylvania the recommended level for TDS is 500mg/L or lower. If your test result is *higher than 500*, have your water professionally tested. If your TDS level is higher than 1000mg/L do not drink or cook with it.

**Monitor your water daily or weekly for changes in conductivity.** Conductivity and TDS are closely linked and can often be measured by the same meter. You can use one or both measurements. If you measure conductivity, we suggest further water testing if your conductivity reading is *higher than 775*.

**Monitor your water daily or weekly for changes in pH.** Use pH strips that you can buy at the drug store. Normal pH is between 6.5 and 8.5. If your result is greater or less than the normal range, get further testing.

**Contact our office for further information on equipment and monitoring your well water.**

### 2 Test Your Water

**Get a baseline test before gas drilling begins near your home.** Test for TDS, conductivity, pH, VOCs, surficants, oil and grease, strontium, sodium, ethane/methane, barium, glycols, calcium, iron, potassium, fluoride, arsenic.

**Every six months test for:** VOCs, surficants, oil and grease, strontium, sodium, ethane/methane, barium, glycols, calcium, iron, potassium, fluoride, arsenic.

**Keep a record of results.** Also write down changes in your health and changes you notice in your water or air. Share this information with your health care provider.

**Test annually for coliform bacteria, nitrates, TDS, pH.** These tests are recommended by the PA DEP for all private wells.

### 3 Stop Using It If...

**Your monitoring results are outside the normal range.** Use bottled water for drinking, cooking and making drinks like baby formula, coffee, and juice.

**Your water burns your skin or causes a rash.** Take showers and baths somewhere else. See your doctor or call our office to see our nurse practitioner.

**You or someone in your family experiences unusual symptoms.** Reported symptoms include stomach pain or discomfort, confusion, nosebleeds, muscle pains.

**If you must drink or cook with your tap water,** leave it *uncovered* in a pitcher or bottle in the refrigerator overnight before using it.

**See a Health Care Provider if you have health concerns.**

**Call us** to see our nurse practitioner or ask questions. **Visit our website** for more info.

724.260.5504 • [www.environmentalhealthproject.org](http://www.environmentalhealthproject.org)

[info@environmentalhealthproject.org](mailto:info@environmentalhealthproject.org)

Southwest PA Environmental Health Project • 2001 Waterdam Plaza Drive, #201, McMurray, PA 15317