

Water Quality Testing

Drinking water comes from a variety of sources including public water systems, private wells, or bottled water. Ensuring safe and healthy drinking water may be as simple as turning on the tap from an EPA-regulated public water system. Other water sources may need a water filter, a check on water fluoridation, or an inspection to ensure a septic tank is not too close to a private well. It is important to know where drinking water comes from, how it's been treated, and if it's safe to drink.

There are two types of drinking water systems in the United States. They are:

- * Public water systems that are subject to United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations.
- * Individual water systems that are not subject to EPA regulations.

According to the EPA, approximately 286 million Americans receive their tap water from a community water system. These public water systems are monitored and regulated as set by the EPA.

An estimated 15% of Americans, or about 45 million people, get their water from private ground water wells that are not subject to EPA regulations. Private ground water wells can provide safe, clean water. However, well water can also become contaminated, leading to illness. It is the responsibility of well owners to maintain and treat their well.

Many illnesses, contaminants, and injuries can be water related. Waterborne diseases are caused by organisms that are directly spread through water. Water-related illnesses can be acquired due to a lack of water for good hygiene, lack of sanitation, or increasing insect populations that breed in water and then spread disease.

It is important to know how these diseases and contaminants affect you, where they are found, and how you can reduce your chance of getting ill or suffering injury. This information will allow you to make informed decisions about your water, hygiene, and sanitation-related activities.