



Well Water Quality Requirements

Los Angeles County regulations require that water for domestic purposes from new, repaired or reconstructed wells must meet all bacteriological and chemical requirements of the State of California Drinking Water Standards (SDWS) prior to use, as described in the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 22. Authority for implementing this requirement is designated to the County’s Department of Public Health, to be administered through the Department’s Drinking Water Program.

A property owner utilizing private water well is responsible for making sure that the well water is safe to drink. Private wells should be tested on a regular basis for nitrate, coliform bacteria and primary inorganic chemicals (i.e. arsenic, lead, copper, etc.) to detect contamination problems early.

**Table 64431-A
 Maximum Contaminant Levels
 Inorganic Chemicals**

| <i>Chemical</i> | <i>Maximum Contaminant Level, mg/L</i> |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Aluminum | 1. |
| Antimony | 0.006 |
| Arsenic | 0.05 |
| Asbestos | 7 MFL* |
| Barium | 1. |
| Beryllium | 0.004 |
| Cadmium | 0.005 |
| Chromium | 0.05 |
| Cyanide | 0.15 |
| Fluoride | 2.0 |
| Mercury | 0.002 |
| Nickel | 0.1 |
| Nitrate (as NO3) | 45. |
| Nitrate+Nitrite (sum as nitrogen) | 10. |
| Nitrite (as nitrogen) | 1. |
| Perchlorate | 0.006 |
| Selenium | 0.05 |
| Thallium | 0.002 |

Water Quality Standards

- A. The quality and safety of drinking water are critical to public health. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) establish specific standards that must be met if the water is to be consumed by humans. The CDPH sets primary maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) of potential contaminants that have an adverse effect on human health. These MCLs are health-based drinking water standards that must be met to ensure the protection of public health.

Water Quality Standards

- B. No water from a new or reconstructed well shall be used for domestic purposes until the water meets the bacteriological and inorganic chemical standards listed by the California Code of Regulations, Title 22. If the well is vulnerable to potential sources of contamination, other chemical analyses may be required.
- C. When the well water meets drinking water standards, the Los Angeles Department of Public Health will issue a Water Supply Approval Letter to the applicant or authorized consultant.
- D. If well water tests exceed the current MCL for a primary bacteriological quality and inorganic chemicals, the Department will provide a well water mitigation application packet to the applicant. This packet provides information and procedures related to options for bringing well water supplies up to drinking water standards.
- E. Many different pathogens may be present in water. It is not practical to test for them individually. Instead, we rely on monitoring for indicator organisms: total coliforms, fecal coliforms and *Escherichia coli*. Due to the acute nature of coliforms, the Department stresses the necessity for initial monitoring. When total coliforms are present, the system is vulnerable to pathogens.
- F. All new or reconstructed wells must have its source water sampled and analyzed by an approved lab for total coliforms per the Total Coliform Rule. If any sample is total coliform positive (coliforms present), the sample will be followed by a fecal coliform or *E. coli* repeat sample.
- G. If repeat samples are coliform positive, the Department will require treatment to remove or inactivate the pathogens. The most commonly used method is disinfection.