

## HEALTH DISTRICT CONTACT INFORMATION

**Panhandle Health District**  
208-415-5200  
[www.phd1.idaho.gov](http://www.phd1.idaho.gov)

**Public Health - North Central District**  
208-799-3100  
[www.idahopublichealth.com](http://www.idahopublichealth.com)

**Southwest District Health**  
208-455-5400  
[www.swdh.org](http://www.swdh.org)

**Central District Health Department**  
208-375-5211  
[www.cdhd.idaho.gov](http://www.cdhd.idaho.gov)

**South Central Public Health District**  
208-737-5900  
[www.phd5.idaho.gov](http://www.phd5.idaho.gov)

**Southeastern Idaho Public Health**  
208-233-9080  
[www.siphidaho.org](http://www.siphidaho.org)

**Eastern Idaho Public Health District**  
208-522-0310  
[www.eiph.idaho.gov](http://www.eiph.idaho.gov)

## IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

**Licensed Well Drillers**  
[research.idwr.idaho.gov/apps/wellconstruction/Licwelldrillers/](http://research.idwr.idaho.gov/apps/wellconstruction/Licwelldrillers/)

**Ground Water Protection Section**  
Boise: 208-287-4800  
[www.idwr.idaho.gov](http://www.idwr.idaho.gov)

**Northern Region, Coeur d'Alene:** 208-762-2800

**Eastern Region, Idaho Falls:** 208-525-7161

**Southern Region, Twin Falls:** 208-736-3033

**Western Region, Boise:** 208-334-2190

## IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

**Water Program**  
Boise Office 208-332-8597  
[www.agri.idaho.gov](http://www.agri.idaho.gov)

## IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE

**Bureau of Community and Environmental Health**  
1-800-445-8647  
[www.environmentalhealth.dhw.idaho.gov](http://www.environmentalhealth.dhw.idaho.gov)  
[bceh@dhw.idaho.gov](mailto:bceh@dhw.idaho.gov)

**Idaho Oral Health Program**  
[www.oralhealth.dhw.idaho.gov](http://www.oralhealth.dhw.idaho.gov)

**Idaho Bureau of Laboratories**  
208-334-2235  
[www.statelab.idaho.gov](http://www.statelab.idaho.gov)

## IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

208-373-0502  
[www.deq.idaho.gov](http://www.deq.idaho.gov)

## NSF INTERNATIONAL

Consumer Hotline 1-800-673-8010  
[www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org)



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF  
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DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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# FLUORIDE IN YOUR WELL WATER

Tips to Protect Your Well Water



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH & WELFARE**  
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Ground water supplies drinking water to approximately 95% of Idahoans, 30% of which rely on domestic or private well water. Private wells can provide a clean, safe source of water if they are properly located, built, tested, and maintained. This brochure provides information on the benefits and concerns of fluoride in your well water. Although optimal levels of fluoride can help prevent tooth decay, some areas of Idaho have water with too much or not enough fluoride. As a private well owner, testing is the only way to know the levels of fluoride in your water.

### WHAT IS FLUORIDE?

Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral released from rocks into the soil, water, and air. Fluoride in well water is a result of water passing through rocks and soil which contain fluoride. Fluoride can be found in your local water supply and is an additive in some over the counter products such as toothpaste and mouth rinse.

### WHAT ARE THE HEALTH BENEFITS AND CONCERNS OF FLUORIDE?

Optimal levels of fluoride in water can prevent cavities and tooth decay, but too much fluoride during the teeth-forming years (age 8 and younger) can lead to visible tooth changes such as staining. If fluoride is consumed at very high levels over long periods of time, bone diseases can occur.

### WHAT DO MY FLUORIDE LEVELS MEAN?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has determined fluoride in drinking water should be below 4 mg/L.

The table to the right shows levels of fluoride in water and the amount of time an individual would need to drink that level of fluoride to experience possible health effects.

### HOW DO I TEST MY WATER FOR FLUORIDE?

1. Receive a sample bottle and instructions for testing from your local laboratory.
2. Wash your hands and wear clean gloves while collecting your sample.
3. Flush the sample tap for five (5) minutes prior to collecting sample.
4. Reduce the flow of the water and fill the sample container as instructed by the laboratory.
5. Once you have collected and labeled your sample, immediately deliver, or ship to the laboratory.

Approximate Level of Fluoride	Amount of Time	Possible Health Effects
Between 0.7-1 mg/L	Lifetime	Best amount for good health
More than 2 mg/L	1 year or more (during tooth development)	Chance of teeth staining (dental fluorosis)
More than 4 mg/L	More than 20 years	Increased risk of broken bones
More than 5 mg/L	More than 20 years	Chance of pain and tenderness in joints and bones (skeletal fluorosis)

### HOW OFTEN SHOULD I TEST?

It is recommended you test your drinking water once every three to five years.

### WHAT CAN I DO TO REDUCE THE FLUORIDE IN MY WATER?

A reverse osmosis filtration system can be installed under your kitchen sink to lower the amount of fluoride in your water. These systems can be purchased at local hardware stores; look for one that is NSF International certified. Until you can install a treatment device, the EPA recommends using another source of water, such as bottled water, for drinking and cooking.

*Note: Boiling water will not remove fluoride.*

### WHAT CAN I DO TO MAINTAIN MY WATER SYSTEM?

If you install a reverse osmosis system, follow the manufacturer's suggested maintenance schedule. Also, your well should be maintained to keep it in good working order. To help keep track of well maintenance, it is recommended that you create and maintain a "system maintenance log." The log should include the location of the well, construction and contractor details, as well as results of any water tests. A copy of a log is available online at [environmentalhealth.dhw.idaho.gov](http://environmentalhealth.dhw.idaho.gov).

*For questions about your well water and laboratories in Idaho, contact the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's Environmental Health Program and Idaho Oral Health Program.*