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**Champaign-Urbana Public Health District**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Private Wells Should Be Tested Regularly To Check for Contamination**

*Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Encourages Residents of  
Champaign County with Private Wells to Test Water Annually*

Champaign, IL – In recognition of Ground Water Awareness Week, March 8 – 14, 2009, the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD) encourages residents of Champaign County with private wells to test their water annually for certain contaminants. Private water wells should be tested every year for evidence of coliform bacteria and nitrates, and should be tested more frequently if there are recurrent incidents of gastrointestinal illness or there are changes in taste, odor or appearance. Private well water test kits are available at the Environmental Health Division of CUPHD located at 201 West Kenyon Road in Champaign from 8:00am – 4:00pm; Monday through Friday. Each test kit is \$20.00.

CUPHD also encourages residents of Champaign County to test for arsenic. General information, labs for testing, and companies that provide treatment for arsenic can be found at <http://c-uphd/wells.html>.

“Private well water safety is often overlooked by the general public”, said Jeff Blackford, Program Coordinator of Environmental Health at CUPHD. “The water from a homeowner’s private well is not checked by any agency. It is the homeowners responsibility to ensure that their drinking water is free of contaminants.”

In Illinois, there is an estimated 400,000 private water wells that serve 1.3 million people. It is extremely important that water wells be located and constructed in such a manner that they yield safe water at all times and under all conditions. If a resident has questions or concerns regarding the location or construction of a private well, they should contact a

Licensed Illinois Water Well Contractor. Local Licensed Water Well Contractors are found at <http://c-uphd/wells.html> .

To ensure a safe water supply, residents are also encouraged to follow the following simple guidelines:

- Keep hazardous chemicals, such as paint, fertilizer, pesticides, and motor oil far away from the well.
- Maintain a proper separation (at least 50 feet) between the well and private septic systems, kennels, livestock operations, and chemical storage areas.
- Seal abandoned water wells.
- Periodically check the well cover or well cap on top of the casing to ensure it is in good repair and securely attached. This seal should keep out insects and rodents. There should be no openings into the cap, except for a factory installed vent.
- Keep your well records in a safe place. These include construction reports, annual water well system maintenance and water testing results.

For more information on private water wells or any other CUPHD program, please contact CUPHD at (217) 352-7961 or visit CUPHD on the web at [www.c-uphd.org](http://www.c-uphd.org) .

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