

FACT SHEET

Pesticides in Private Drinking Water Wells

City of Stamford
Department of Health and Social Services

This fact sheet has been written to provide you information about the newly enacted Ordinance to test well water in Stamford for pesticide contamination.

What pesticides have been found?

Two pesticides have been found. They are **dieldrin** and **chlordan**.

Where has the contamination been found?

Contaminated well water has been found throughout the North Stamford area. Those wells that have been tested either privately by residents (who shared their results) or by the Stamford Health Department can be found on a map color coded and published in the City of Stamford's web site www.cityofstamford.org under the Health Department and Safe Drinking Water information.

Where can I get my water tested?

The Stamford Health Department has contracted with a private laboratory to perform the tests at a greatly reduced cost. A telephone hot line has been set up for those wishing to have their water tested. Call the Stamford Health Department at (203) 977-0816 and leave your name, address, and telephone number and you will be added to the list of those wishing to be tested. You may also respond to the letter that will be sent to all home owners with well water.

What is the cost of this test?

The cost of this test is \$100 payable by check to the City of Stamford at the time the water sample is collected. Unfortunately credit or debit cards cannot be accepted.

What are the levels of these pesticides?

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) sets health-based action levels for many chemicals in private well water. Action levels are used to decide when water treatment is needed. The action levels for dieldrin is 0.03 micrograms per liter (ug/L) or parts per billion (ppb). The action level for chlordan is 0.3 ug/L. If a person is exposed to a chemical in their drinking water at a concentration below the action level DPH considers their health risk from that exposure to be insignificant. At concentrations above the action level, exposure over many years can increase a person's risk of health effects. For this reason, it is important to limit your exposure to drinking water when it

exceeds an action level. It is also important to know that an increased health risk does not necessarily mean that a health effect will occur.

Will I get a copy of my test results?

Test results will be mailed to you approximately three weeks after the collection date with a letter explaining the results. All test results will be mapped on the City of Stamford website and shared with the Connecticut Department of Public Health and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. If a problem with the water supply is detected, the Stamford Department of Health assumes no responsibility in taking corrective measures to remediate the situation but will make suggestions as to how the problem might be corrected (i.e., providing contact information on companies that can install a whole house GAC filter if your well contains pesticides that are above a cleanup level).

What if my well water is contaminated?

A Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) filter system for private wells can be installed to remove pesticides and other organic compounds. A GAC filter used in a single family house typically consists of two (2) canisters (primary and backup) installed in series, each containing a minimum of one cubic foot of granulated activated carbon. A prefilter, flow restrictor, flow meter, and sampling taps are also installed and iron/manganese removal system may also be needed prior to the carbon canisters if concentrations of iron manganese exceed recommended levels. As polluted water passes through the carbon canisters, the activated carbon removes the unwanted substances. The ability of the GAC filter to remove organic compounds declines with use. Monitoring the GAC filter system is necessary to determine when the activated carbon is allowing small concentrations of pesticides and VOCs to pass through. Maintenance is conducted by removing the primary carbon canister, moving the backup carbon canister to the primary position, and installing a new carbon canister in the backup position.

Is the Potability Test the same as the Pesticide Test?

The usual potability test which is required by the Stamford Health Department for new home sales tests only for the presence of bacteria and a few common chemicals. It DOES NOT test for pesticides, VOCs, and other contaminants such as radon and heavy metals. The Connecticut Department of Public Health recommends that you test your well annually for a full spectrum of contaminants.

If I have more question, who can I call?

Stamford Health Department Laboratory

Robert Murray (203) 977-4378 email rmurray1@ci.stamford.ct.us

Joseph Kuntz (203) 977-5843 email jkuntz@ci.stamford.ct.us

Connecticut Department of Health – Environmental Health
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