

Testing Your Well Water with Community Science Institute

Understanding and Protecting Well Water
Trumansburg Fire Hall
5/29/2025

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Executive Director
Community Science Institute



Community Science Institute



CSI is a 501(c)3 non-profit and NYSDOH-ELAP certified water testing lab in Ithaca, NY

CSI offers three types of programming:

Three large, light blue water droplets are arranged horizontally across the middle of the slide. Each droplet contains text describing a type of programming offered by CSI. The droplets are set against a light yellow background, and a blue wavy line representing water is at the bottom.

**Volunteer
Water
Monitoring
Partnerships**

**Outreach and
Education**

**Fee-for-
Service Water
Testing**

CSI's Mission

To inspire and empower communities to safeguard water resources by cultivating scientific literacy through volunteer water quality monitoring, certified laboratory analyses, and education.

Fee-for-Service Water Testing

We test water from private wells, municipal water systems, swimming beaches, effluents, and more!



Residents

- Home sales
- Routine testing
- Health/taste/quality concerns

In 2024, CSI's lab tested more than 2,900 drinking water and wastewater samples!

We serve:

Local Businesses

- Farms
- Restaurants
- Breweries
- Wineries
- Mobile Home Parks
- Apartment Buildings

Government Agencies

- Tompkins County Health Dept.
- NY State Parks
- NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation
- NYS Dept. of Health

NYSDOH-ELAP #11790

Testing Your Water at CSI's Certified Lab

Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday 9 AM – 5 PM

Sample Drop-Off Hours:

- Monday – Thursday
- 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM



*Please note: Samples dropped off outside of these times may or may not be accepted, at the discretion of CSI staff. If you are unable to drop off samples during these hours, please call 607-257-6606 to make special arrangements. **Bacteriological samples cannot be accepted on Fridays.***

Visit us at:

Langmuir Lab Room 283
95 Brown Rd Ithaca, NY

By the Ithaca Airport

Sample bottles available for pick up at:

- CSI's Lab
- ShurSave in Trumansburg
- Greenstar on Cascadilla Street

In-House Testing

Potable Only

Total Coliform/ <i>E.coli</i>
Standard Plate Count
Nitrate, Nitrite
Calcium Hardness
Sulfate
Conductivity
Turbidity
Orthophosphate (SRP)

Both

pH
Chloride
Alkalinity
Total Dissolved Solids
Turbidity
Microcystin

Non-Potable Only

<i>E.coli</i> Enumeration
Fecal Coliform
Nitrate+Nitrite (NO _x)
Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen (TKN)
Ammonia Nitrogen
Soluble Reactive Phosphorous
Total Hardness
Total Solids
Total Suspended Solids
Dissolved Oxygen
Chlorophyll a

We partner with larger labs to subcontract testing for other analytes such as heavy metals, PFAS, BOD, etc.

What should I test my water for?

There are many well water tests. However, only a few will be relevant for most people. CSI can help you determine what will be most useful based on your situation!

Routine Testing:

- Annually for total coliform/*E.coli*
- Every 3-5 years for nitrate and nitrite

Odd smells, taste, color? Changes to the water?
Considering installing a water softener or treatment system?

- We will help you determine the most relevant tests!

More comprehensive testing:

- Total coliform/*E.coli*
- Nitrate and nitrite (especially if near agriculture or if there are infants in the home)
- Lead (if house built before 1986)
- Arsenic, Manganese, Iron

Resources

FAQ page on CSI's website

Handouts on common questions such as how to shock a well, iron and manganese bacteria, and microcystin in beach wells

Referrals for local water treatment specialists

Expedited results for basic potability tests for an additional fee

Drinking Water Resources for the General Public

Explore answers to common questions about private water systems, well maintenance, and safe drinking water practices. Whether you're troubleshooting a problem or simply staying informed, find clear, reliable information all in one place.

- Contact us at (607) 257-6606 or by email: info@communityscience.org with any questions or concerns.
- Our business hours are Monday – Friday, 9 am – 5pm.
- Samples are accepted Monday – Thursday, 9 am – 3 pm.



TESTING YOUR WATER AT CSI'S CERTIFIED LAB



Volunteer Monitoring
Outreach and Education
Certified Water Testing (NYSDOH-ELAP #11790)

Testing Your Water at CSI's Certified Lab

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- Sample Drop-off Hours: Monday – Thursday, 9 am – 3 pm
 - Please note: Samples dropped off outside of these times may or may not be accepted, at the discretion of CSI staff. If you are unable to drop off samples during these hours, please call 607-257-6606 to make special arrangements.
 - Bacteriological samples cannot be accepted on Fridays.
- The Community Science Institute is certified by the New York State Department of Health-Environmental Laboratory Approval Program (NYSDOH-ELAP) under National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) guidelines. Our identification numbers are ELAP ID# 11790 and EPA ID# NY01518.

SHOCK DISINFECTION OF WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS



Your Partner for a Healthy Community

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION
www.tompkinscounty.org/health/eh

Frank Kruppa
Public Health Director
55 Beaman Road
Ithaca, NY 14850-1247

Ph: (607) 274-6688
F: (607) 274-6695

Shock Disinfection of Water Supply Systems

When a water supply has been exposed to bacterial contamination, it is advisable to disinfect the system using a commercial chlorine compound such as chlorine bleach. Disinfection should occur after: construction of a new water supply, repairs are made to an existing water supply, a positive coliform or E. coli test, or any time the well cap or lid has been removed.

The disinfection process outlined below is intended to eliminate the effects of previous contamination, but will not continue to disinfect or render safe a water supply which is continuously or intermittently contaminated. Therefore, before disinfecting the water supply system, all sources of pollution should be eliminated and proper repairs should be made. Contact a water system specialist or the Tompkins County Health Department at 274-6688 for more information.

AFTER YOU'VE SHOCKED YOUR WELL



Partnership with Communities to Protect Water
NYSDOH ELAP #11790 www.CommunityScience.org EPA Lab Code NY01518

After shocking your well, re-test for bacteria to be sure that all of the bacteria have been eliminated.

BEFORE re-testing for bacteria - the chlorine bleach must be flushed out of the well and plumbing. The chlorine will eventually be removed by running the water in your home.

- It normally takes **2 full weeks** of using the water daily in the home to remove all of the chlorine.
- When you can no longer smell chlorine in the water, the system should be flushed for an **additional 4 to 5 days.**

Water Testing Assistance Fund

We are proud to provide discounted drinking water tests* to those who otherwise could not afford the cost of these analyses.

**Applies to “in-house” water tests only. Based upon availability of funds.*

We believe that everyone has the right to know if their water is safe to drink!



Why provide this service?

It is needed!

CSI is the only commercial ELAP-certified lab in Tompkins County and the Cayuga Lake watershed

ELAP-certified labs follow strict quality assurance and quality control procedures that make the data reliable, consistent, and regulatory quality.



We provide valuable education to clients about their drinking water resources and recommended testing to fit their specific needs and budgets

Provides a sustainable source of income (~ 50% of our income in 2024)

Stay in touch!

Join CSI's email list for
monthly updates



Follow us on social media



@communityscienceinstitute

Reach out with your well testing
questions

info@communityscience.org

(607) 257-6606

www.communityscience.org