

# West Virginia Department of Agriculture

Walt Helmick, Commissioner



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**NEWS RELEASE**  
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## **WVDA NOW TESTING DRINKING WATER FOR COLIFORM BACTERIA**

**Charleston, W.Va.** –The West Virginia Department of Agriculture’s (WVDA) Moorefield laboratory has been certified by the state Department of Health and Human Resources Bureau for Public Health (DHHR-BPH) to test water samples for total coliform and E. coli bacteria.

Public Service Districts, campgrounds and similar entities in the region that use well water for public consumption must have their water tested monthly to ensure its safety. DHHR recommends that private wells be tested annually.

However, samples must be analyzed within a 30-hour window, sometimes making it difficult to get water to the next closest certified lab in Kearneysville.

“We have the necessary equipment and we have the people with the appropriate expertise,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Walt Helmick. “This is a service that we can offer to help ensure that West Virginians have safe water to drink, whether that’s from a municipal source or private wells.”

Although the service is open to private households, anyone hooked up to a “city” or other public system should contact their water provider first about any safety concerns, rather than taking samples individually to WVDA.

Besides the 30-hour limit, samples must be gathered in special bottles and must adhere to proper protocols to get an accurate analysis. The lab can only accept samples Monday – Wednesday from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Thursdays from 8 a.m. – noon. Contact Kriston Strickler at 304-538-2397 to get a sample bottle or for more information. A \$30 fee applies to all samples.

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