County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY
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Water Quality Testing Requirements

What tests are required for a permit?

The results of the following water quality tests must be performed by an Environmental Laboratory Accreditations Program (ELAP) accredited, or otherwise departmentally approved laboratory.

A. For all well construction (domestic, irrigation, industrial), the following tests are required: nitrate, total dissolved solids, chloride, iron, manganese, and hexavalent chromium for wells south of Valencia Creek. Ref. 7.70.110 (B)

B. For new or existing wells that are seeking a permit as an Individual Water System, (IWS, required for domestic wells):

i. Bacteriological analysis for total coliform organisms (presence/absence). Ref 7.73.070 (A)

ii. Chemical Analysis for the following inorganic primary contaminants, as well as some secondary contaminants that are important for well maintenance:

Aluminum, Antimony, Arsenic, Barium, Beryllium, Cadmium, Chloride**, Total Chromium, Hexavalent Chromium*, Conductivity**, Cyanide, Fluoride, Iron, Manganese, Mercury, Nickel, Nitrate, Nitrite, Selenium, Total Dissolved Solids (TDS)**, Thallium. Ref 7.73.070 (B)

*Hexavalent Chromium testing is required if well is located South of Valencia Creek. Newly constructed wells must do this testing as described in Section A.

** Chloride, Conductivity, and TDS are required for wells in the Coastal Zone and when requested by the County due to known water quality risks. Newly constructed wells must do this testing as described in Section A.

Additional analyses including Aggressivity, Alkalinity, Bicarbonate, Bromide, Calcium, Carbonate, Color, Copper Hardness, Hydroxide, Langelier Index, Lead, Magnesium, MBAS (Surfactants), Odor pH, Potassium, Silver, Sulfate, Sodium, Turbidity, and Zinc are strongly recommended, but are not required.

Asbestos and Perchlorate, while included in Title-22, are not typically found within Santa Cruz County and are therefore waived unless specifically requested by the County.

How do I test my well?

For a new well construction, the Licensed Well Driller that you hire can collect the samples and have them tested at an accredited lab. For an existing well seeking an IWS permit, a well driller or pump company can help. The following companies are licensed and may be able to provide drilling, yield, and water quality testing services:

https://scceh.com/Portals/6/Env_Health/Land%20Use/Land%20Use%20Documents/2025/WaterWellPumpContractorsandDrillers.pdf

Environmental Health also maintains a list of accredited Water Testing Laboratories on our website at https://scceh.com/NewHome/Programs/WaterResources/SmallWaterSystemRegulatory.aspx.

The State Water Resources Control Board allows you to search accredited laboratories by address at https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/labs/