

# FACT SHEET

## Pesticides in Private Drinking Water Wells

City of Stamford  
Department of Health and Social Services

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This fact sheet has been written to provide you information about chemical contamination that has been found in some drinking water wells in the North Stamford area.

### **What pesticides have been found?**

The two pesticides most commonly found are **dieldrin** and **chlordan**.

### **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.

### **Where can I get my water tested?**

Testing for Pesticides and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) is a rather specialized test and requires careful collection techniques. We recommend that EPA method 505 and EPA method 524.2 be used for testing for pesticides and VOCs respectively. If you wish to have your water tested contact the following:

Environment Analysis Corporation	(203) 966 5144
A&A Systems Control Inc.	(203) 329-9944
Alliance	(203) 323-9968
Phoenix Laboratory	(860) 645-1102
Premier Laboratory	(800) 334-0103
Associated Water Industries	(203) 324-9561

### **Should I share my test results?**

In order to gather more information about well contamination we ask that you request the testing laboratory to send us a copy of your test results or that you yourself submit them to the Stamford Health Department Laboratory.

mail to Stamford Health Department Laboratory  
888 Washington Blvd.  
Stamford, CT 06901  
or fax (203) 977-5963

**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](http://www.cityofstamford.org) under the Health Department and Safe Drinking Water information.

**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 done on well water test for bacteria and a few common chemicals. It DOES NOT test for pesticides and VOCs.

**If I have more question, who can I call?**

Stamford Health Department Laboratory

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Connecticut Department of Health – Well Water

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