



**For Immediate Release
Town of Watchung, New Jersey:**

Is Your Drinking Water Safe? Town of Watchung Residents May Have Their Well Water Tested on September 24th

Raritan Headwaters Association (RHA) is providing well water testing for residents in partnership with Town of Watchung. If your household water comes from a private well, it is not tested by any state or local authority. Well water tests can be expensive, but Town of Watchung residents may have their drinking water tested for coliform bacteria and nitrates for \$60. Additional testing options are also available.

The well-testing kits contain easy-to-follow instructions and containers approved by a state-certified laboratory. Information will be made available at the Farmer's Market on Sunday, September 13th from 10AM to 12PM and kits may be purchased on Sunday, September 20, 2015 10:00 am to 1:00 pm at the Watchung Fall Farmer's Market, Best Lake Parking lot on Valley Road in Watchung, NJ. The water samples may be dropped off Thursday, September 24, 2015, 8:00 am to 9:30 am at Borough of Watchung Municipal Building (15 Mountain Boulevard, Watchung, NJ). No cash will be accepted; checks only. For further information contact Shelini Parikh at sparikh@watchungnj.gov or 908-756-0080 Ext. 221.

"Studies show that as many as 50% of private wells fail to meet EPA drinking water standards for at least one harmful pollutant including coliform bacteria, nitrates, arsenic and radon among others. Many citizens are not aware that they need to test their water every year for some contaminants because conditions change," states Kristi MacDonald, PhD, Director of Science, of the Raritan Headwaters Association.

Safe drinking water is essential to good health, and testing well water at a certified lab is the only way to know whether water from a private well is safe. Both human-caused and naturally occurring contaminants are often found in private wells. Nitrates and bacteria, which can lead to immediate and serious health conditions, may be found in well water as a result of a poorly performing septic system or a nearby agricultural source. Two naturally occurring elements, arsenic and radon, are also commonly found in well water in northwestern New Jersey. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recommends that all homeowners test their well water for contaminants annually.

About Raritan Headwaters Association

Since 1959, RHA has been working to address water quality issues and has served as an effective advocate for conservation throughout the 39 communities in Hunterdon, Morris, and Somerset Counties that make up the Raritan Headwaters watershed region. The 470 square mile watershed plays a critical role in meeting the demands of more than 1.5 million residential, commercial, agricultural and municipal water users within the region and beyond, into New Jersey's urban areas. To learn more about the Raritan Headwaters Association, please visit www.raritanheadwaters.org or call (908) 234-1852.

Contact: Margaret Logreira, Raritan Headwaters Association at 908-234-1852, ext. 401 or welltesting@raritanheadwaters.org.