

Questions and answers about well water sampling

Why is FMC testing my private well?

FMC has been conducting environmental studies in the vicinity of its Middleport plant under the direction of the governmental regulatory Agencies, the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. As part of this study, a well survey was done in March 1999 to identify private wells within a three mile radius of the plant. FMC then initiated a program to sample a certain number of these private wells to provide additional data on groundwater quality.

What will the testing show?

Testing identifies the presence of certain metals, and organic and inorganic substances in well water. The substances tested for are called the "parameters." A complete list of the testing parameters is provided on the enclosed letter.

Although not requested by the Agencies, and not related to the FMC Middleport plant, as a courtesy, FMC will include a test for the presence of bacteria and lead in your well water. This test will provide residents important information about the water quality of their well.

Will I get the results from my well water tests?

YES. The results of the analysis of your water will be sent to you with an explanation of what parameters have been detected and at what levels. The results will also include the New York State standards for drinking water for reference.

Results of the bacteria testing will be interpreted for you by the Niagara County Health Department. You will receive a letter reporting the findings of the bacterial testing of your well from the Niagara County Health Department.

When will the results be available?

We expect sampling reports 10 to 12 weeks after a sample has been taken. Results from bacterial

testing from the Niagara County Health Department may take an additional 2 to 8 weeks.

What if I have questions about the results?

If you have questions about your results, call 735-3761, Ext. 289. Questions about the bacterial results should be directed to Mr. James Devald or Mr. Ronald Gwoztek at the Niagara County Health Department at 439-7453.

What if my water exceeds the acceptable levels for drinking water?

Although most of the private wells are not used for drinking water, if a drinking water standard other than bacteria is exceeded, FMC will arrange for the well to be retested as soon as possible. The property owner will be advised of the findings and results of the retesting. If applicable, FMC, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation or the Niagara County Health Department will provide recommendations on use and possible treatment options.

While the presence of bacteria and/or elevated lead are unrelated to FMC's study, they are important water quality parameters for residents using their wells for domestic purposes such as drinking, bathing or cooking. If the drinking water standard for bacteria is exceeded, the Niagara County Health Department will handle follow-up testing and recommend treatment options.

The presence of lead above drinking water standards may be due to the materials used in construction of the well. Many older wells have elevated levels of lead due to corrosion of lead plumbing commonly used in the past. The attached sheet from the USEPA explains this condition which is often found when sampling water from older wells.

FMC

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