



## Colrain residents eligible for free well water tests



Jim Starbard, Massachusetts state lead with RCAP Solution, at left, works with a property owner on free well water testing. Contributed Photo

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**COLRAIN** — Town residents with private wells are eligible for free water testing provided by the Private Well Program to Protect Public Health.

The program is a community partnership funded by The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts and carried out by Resources for Communities and People (RCAP) Solutions, a nonprofit that assists rural communities with water and wastewater utility issues.

Residents are able to sign up now and the testing will take place throughout September and October. To request a test, visit [rcapsolutions.org/ma-private-wells](https://rcapsolutions.org/ma-private-wells).

The Private Well Program to Protect Public Health is a multi-pronged program for private well safety. It gives free private well testing, educates the public about contaminated private wells, and works with public officials to enact legislation to promote equitable drinking water.

The program has funding to perform 240 tests in six towns annually. Colrain was chosen because it has a high number of private wells and is a member of the Cooperative Public Health Service (CPHS) of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), one of the partners.

Jenna Day, director of community resources at RCAP Solutions, said the free testing will provide “useful data to state agencies about beliefs of homeowners and the contaminants in private wells.” Last year, they found that 27% of wells had levels of contaminants exceeding state health standards.

Maegen McCaffrey, vice president of communications for RCAP, wrote in a statement that, “Unlike public drinking water systems, private wells do not have experts regularly checking the water’s source and quality before it is sent to the tap. Households that rely on private wells should take special precautions to ensure the safety of their drinking water.”

McCaffrey explained some people may live on a private well, and not know it.

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