

# Roadside Spring Water



## What is roadside spring water?

Roadside spring water is water beneath the ground which flows naturally to the surface of the earth. Often, people attach hoses or pipes to these springs for collecting the water in buckets.

## Should I drink water from roadside springs?

No. You cannot tell if roadside spring water is safe because the quality can change fast and these sources of water are not routinely tested for chemicals or microbes.

**Remember:**

Just because water looks “crystal clear” does not mean that it is safe to drink.

## How do roadside springs become contaminated?

Roadside springs are generally not protected from environmental contamination (e.g. feces from animal activity.) Microbes, such as bacteria, can get into the spring water directly from the soil or with the rain as it runs over the ground. Those microbes can make you sick with diarrhea or other effects.

In addition to microbes, there may be manmade pollutants or unsafe amounts of natural minerals in the spring water.

For these reasons, ‘safe’ spring water can become unsafe in a matter of hours or minutes. No testing of this water would guarantee its safety.



## What sources of water are safe for drinking?

You have several choices of safe drinking water:

- treated municipal water
- tested well water from a properly constructed well
- bottled water

If your community is on a “Boil Water Advisory” the municipal drinking water can be made safe by boiling it for at least one minute. If your well water has safe amounts of chemicals and minerals but the content of bacteria was found to be “unsatisfactory”, then that water can also be made safe to drink by boiling it for at least one minute.

### **Remember:**

Even a well with the best protection can become contaminated over time, therefore any drinking water source should be tested regularly.

## Can I boil roadside spring water to make it safe?

No. Boiling can remove microbes, but not harmful chemicals, so boiling roadside spring water would not guarantee its safety.

## Is my community on a “Boil Water Advisory”?

To find out if your community is on a “Boil Water Advisory”, contact your local town council or local service district committee member. You can also find your community listed on the Department of Environment’s water resources website at:

[www.gov.nl.ca/env/water](http://www.gov.nl.ca/env/water)

## Where can I find out more?

If you have any questions about drinking water safety, please do not hesitate to contact the Government Service Centre or Regional Health Authority nearest you.



Department of Health and Community Services  
Department of Environment and Conservation  
Department of Government Services  
Regional Health Authorities

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# Drinking Water Awareness