

Drinking Water: Certified Water Testing Laboratories in Nebraska

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This publication explains the certification process water testing laboratories follow, and lists certified government and commercial operated laboratories.

Many Nebraska laboratories offer testing services that include drinking water analyses. Some of these laboratories are operated by government agencies and others are private commercial laboratories. A degree of reliability and accuracy can be expected when testing is performed in an approved laboratory situation.

For additional information on drinking water analyses, see NebGuide 907 *Drinking Water: Testing for Quality*.

Laboratory Certification

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services administers the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). This includes certification of laboratories to test drinking water samples in Nebraska.

A certified laboratory must use approved test methodology and equipment and meet specific requirements outlined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). A certified laboratory may not be approved to test all potential drinking water contaminants. Certification is given to laboratories to analyze specific contaminant(s) and a laboratory must meet criteria for each individual analysis for which it wants to be certified.

Regulatory certification provides some assurance that the laboratory can perform water quality analyses within an acceptable range of accuracy, and will provide reliable and accurate results. It is not a guarantee that a specific water sample analysis has been or will be performed accurately.

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Public Health Environmental Laboratory either is certified or has a contract with a certified laboratory to test for every EPA Safe Drinking Water Act publicly regulated drinking water contaminant. In addition, the laboratory can provide information, on request, regarding all laboratories located and certified in Nebraska, and specific contaminants for which each is certified.

Non-certified laboratories may use the same equipment and procedures as a certified laboratory. Such laboratories may provide accurate analyses, but there is no independent information about the laboratory's ability to obtain reliable results for a particular analysis.

Certified Water Testing Laboratories in Nebraska

The laboratories listed are those located in Nebraska that are certified in Nebraska (as of October 2008) to test private drinking water supply samples. This list is not meant to be an endorsement of any organization. Each laboratory offers different testing services; all of the laboratories are certified to test for bacteria. Check with laboratories at the time testing is to be done to determine if they are certified to perform the specific tests in which you are interested.

For a full and current list of water quality parameters for which each lab has obtained certification, please contact the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Drinking Water Laboratory Certification Office at (402) 471-8426 or through e-mail at sandy.iron@nebraska.gov.

Note that the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Public Health Environmental Laboratory is the only lab in the state that is certified by the EPA for drinking water analysis for a wide range of water quality constituents (e.g., metals, nutrients, organic compounds).

Government-Operated Certified Laboratories

Central District Health Department
1137 South Locust
Grand Island, NE 68801
(308) 385-5175

Douglas County Health Department Laboratory Services
4102 Woolworth Ave.
Omaha, NE 68105
(402) 444-7496

Nebraska Health and Human Services System
Public Health Environmental Laboratory
3701 South 14th
Lincoln, NE 68502
(402) 471-8426

Commercial-Operated Certified Laboratories

Enviro Service, Inc.
818 South Beltline Highway East
Scottsbluff, NE 69361
(308) 632-3933

Olsen Agricultural Laboratory
210 East First Street
P.O. Box 370
McCook, NE 69001
(308) 345-3670

Servi-Tech Laboratories
1602 Park West Drive
Hastings, NE 68901
(402) 463-3522

Contacting a Laboratory

Contact the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Drinking Water Laboratory Certification Office to ask which laboratories are certified in Nebraska to test for the specific contaminant(s) you are considering. Ask individual laboratories about test fees, sampling bottles or kits, and sampling instructions. Typically there will be a fee for each contaminant tested; however, some laboratories offer “package tests” which will include testing for a number of contaminants for a specified fee. For many contaminants there are special sample containers, preservatives, and sampling procedures that must be used. Always be sure to carefully follow the sampling instructions provided by the laboratory.

Non-Drinking Water Testing

The information in this NebGuide refers to testing water for human domestic consumption and use. There may be occasions when tests are needed to determine the suitability of water for other uses. Many of the laboratories listed above provide testing for uses in addition to domestic use. Reputable non-certified laboratories also may provide non-drinking water testing.

This publication has been peer reviewed.

Disclaimer

Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended of those not mentioned and no endorsement by University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension is implied for those mentioned.

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