

Contact Information

Idaho Public Health Districts

Panhandle Health District

8500 N. Atlas Road
Hayden, ID 83835
(208) 415-5100
www.phd1.idaho.gov

North Central Health District

215 10th Street
Lewiston, ID 83501
(208) 799-3100
idahopublichealth.com

Southwest District Health

13307 Miami Lane
Caldwell, ID 83607
(208) 454-7722
www.publichealthidaho.com

Central District Health Department

707 North Armstrong Place
Boise, ID 83704
(208) 375-5211
www.cdhd.idaho.gov

South Central Public Health District

1020 Washington Street North
Twin Falls, ID 83301
(208) 734-5900
www.phd5.idaho.gov

Southeastern Idaho Public Health

1901 Alvin Ricken Drive
Pocatello, ID 83201
(208) 233-9080
www.sdhdidaho.org

Eastern Idaho Public Health District

1250 Hollipark Drive
Idaho Falls, ID 83401
(208) 522-0310
www.phd7.idaho.gov

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare

Bureau of Community and Environmental Health
1-800-926-2588
www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov

Idaho Department of Agriculture

State Office - (208) 332-8500
www.agri.idaho.gov

Contact Information

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

State Office, Boise

(208) 373-0502
www.deq.idaho.gov

Coeur d'Alene Regional Office

(208) 769-1422 or toll-free: (877) 370-0017
(serving Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai,
and Shoshone counties)

Lewiston Regional Office

(208) 799-4370 or toll-free: (877) 541-3304
(serving Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, and Nez
Perce counties)

Boise Regional Office

(208) 373-0550 or toll-free: (888) 800-3480
(serving Ada, Adams, Boise, Canyon, Elmore,
Gem, Owyhee, Payette, Valley, and Washington
counties)

Twin Falls Regional Office

(208) 736-2190 or toll-free: (800) 270-1663
(serving Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome,
Lincoln, Minidoka, and Twin Falls counties)

Pocatello Regional Office

(208) 236-6160 or toll-free: (888) 655-6160
(serving Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Butte, Caribou,
Franklin, Oneida, and Power counties)

Idaho Falls Regional Office

(208) 528-2650 or toll-free: (800) 232-4635
(serving Bonneville, Clark, Custer, Fremont,
Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, and Teton counties)

Idaho Department of Water Resources

State Office, Boise

(208) 287-4800
www.idwr.idaho.gov

Northern Region, Coeur d'Alene

(208) 762-2800

Western Region, Boise

(208) 334-2190

Southern Region, Twin Falls

(208) 736-3033

Eastern Region, Idaho Falls

(208) 525-7177



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Nitrate in Idaho's Ground Water



Information on how to
protect your family and
Idaho's drinking water



Idaho Department of
Environmental Quality
www.deq.idaho.gov



What Is Nitrate?

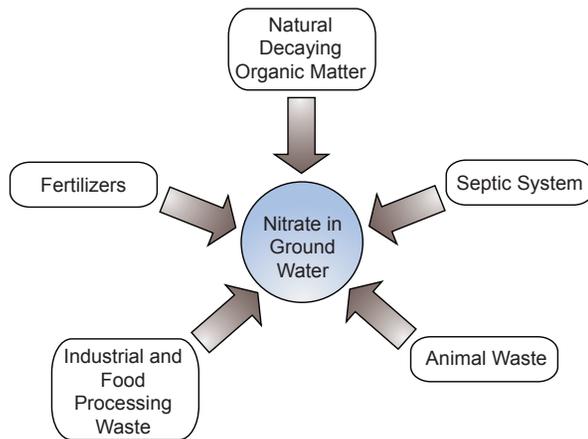


Nitrate is a form of nitrogen that is essential for plant growth. It is widely used throughout Idaho, mostly as a fertilizer to promote plant growth. If too much fertilizer is applied, the excess that is not used up by crops, lawns, plants, and

trees can be washed down through the soils by irrigation or precipitation and eventually reach ground water.

Where Does Nitrate Come From?

Nitrate is the most widespread contaminant in Idaho's ground water, and also the most preventable. **In addition to fertilizers**, other sources of nitrate include **septic systems, animal waste, and industrial and food processing waste**.



Improperly **abandoned wells** or **older wells** not meeting current well construction standards can act as a direct pathway for contaminants at the land surface to reach ground water. This is a concern because ground water supplies most of Idaho's drinking water.

Nitrate and Your Health

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency safe drinking water standard and the Idaho Ground Water Quality Standard for nitrate is 10 milligrams per liter (mg/L). The standards are set to ensure that drinking water is safe for human consumption.

In the human digestive system, nitrate is converted to nitrite, which can interfere with the ability of red blood cells to carry oxygen to tissues in the body. The resulting oxygen deficiency can cause illness in infants under six months of age and under extremely rare instances, possibly death.

How Do I Know if My Water Is Safe for My Family?



Public water systems are required to test water for contaminants and remove them with a treatment process before the water is delivered to customers. Private well owners however, are not required to test or treat water to remove contaminants.

It is extremely important to have private well water tested, particularly if infants, pregnant or nursing mothers, or adults with chronic health problems will be drinking the water. Your local district health department can provide you with sampling instructions, sample bottles, and assistance in locating a certified laboratory in your area. District health departments are listed on the back of this brochure.

Information for private well owners:

www.wellowner.org

Information on water treatment:

www.nsf.org
www.wqa.org

What if Nitrate Is Found in My Water?

If test results show nitrate at a level greater than 10 mg/L (the safe drinking water standard), do not give the water to infants under six months old, either directly or mixed in formula. Use commercially bottled water.



Boiling will not remove nitrate, and in fact will concentrate the nitrate through evaporation. Contact your local district health department or the Idaho Department of Environmental

Quality for information about treatment options to remove nitrate from your well water.

You Can Protect Idaho's Ground Water

Ground water supplies drinking water to 95% of Idaho's population, so it must be protected from contamination. Nitrate contamination is preventable.

Here are several simple things you can do:

- Inspect the area near your wellhead and remove any waste or debris.
- Contact your district health department for information on septic system maintenance.
- Use only the recommended amounts of fertilizer and water in your yard or garden.
- Contact an Idaho well drilling professional to inspect your well seal to see if it meets new safety standards.
- Share your knowledge with your neighbors, friends, and family to prevent further contamination.
- Contact DEQ to find out about ground water protection and improvement efforts in your area.