MDI Biological Laboratory

2026-2027 school year

Dear Parents, guardians, or other community samplers

Thank you for participating in our new Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA) project, "**Communicating Data".** This project is funded through the National Institute of Nursing Research and the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services.

Why should you test your drinking water?

Nearly half of all Maine and New Hampshire households depend on private wells for drinking water. Private wells **are not regulated**, so it is up to the homeowner to routinely test their well water for possible contaminants. Due to the unique geology of Maine and New Hampshire, wells are often contaminated with toxic metals that are naturally found in the bedrock. Public water **is regulated**, but sometimes, contaminants are introduced into the drinking water via passage through old pipes or faucets that contain lead or toxic levels of other metals like copper or zinc. Testing your water is important so everyone in your household can access healthy water.

Instructions for Sampling

- Instructions for sampling are included in your test kit
- Ensure your sample is returned to the school with a signed permission form and completed datasheet; **samples cannot be analyzed without these documents**
- Your sample will be analyzed at the Dartmouth Trace Elements Analysis Laboratory

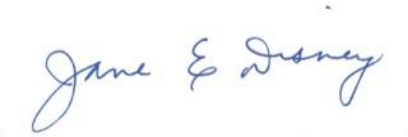
What happens next?

You will receive notice from the school that your test results are available online. To find your data, go to www.allaboutarsenic.org and type your sample number in the "Look up your sample number" at the bottom of the homepage. Your number has the school year followed by a dash and number (2526-XXX). A refrigerator magnet with your number is included in your sample kit to help you remember your sample number. You will also receive a direct communication with sample results from us via the e-mail you provide on the datasheet.

What about my privacy?

All drinking water data will be available on a public citizen science website called anecdata.org, created here at MDI Biological Laboratory. Though your individual results are being added to a collection of data from this project to better understand drinking water issues and help students work with data, we have ensured that no personally identifiable information is publicly available. Students analyzing data will only be able to see information related to the drinking water sample, such as drinking water source, filtration status, etc. In addition, we have reduced the location precision on the publicly available map so no one will be able to determine the precise location where the water sample was collected. Questions? Contact us at drinkingwater@mdibl.org

Thank you for your participation!



Jane Disney, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator

Provide permission on the next page and return all forms otherwise, samples cannot be analyzed.

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Permission Form

Please sign and ensure this permission form is returned to the school with your water sample. **Any sample that arrives at the school without a signed permission form will not be analyzed.**

- ☐ I understand that by contributing a water sample, I am involved in a drinking water testing project that is part of the science curriculum of a participating school.
- ☐ I understand the project needs information about my drinking water source. This information will help students ask and answer questions about drinking water quality and provide me with important information about my tap water.
- ☐ I understand that although teachers, students, and other community members can access general information about my drinking water source and test results, personally identifying information will not be accessible and will be kept confidential.
- ☐ I understand that my sample results will be accessible at allaboutarsenic.org and sent to me by e-mail and that it's my responsibility to be sure I have received my test results. No one else can access my individually identifiable results unless I share them.
- ☐ I have helped my child/student fill out the paper datasheet that, in addition to this permission form, must accompany the drinking water sample when it is submitted for analysis, ensured that information about my tap water is accurate, to the best of my knowledge, and checked yes or no for all permissions for data sharing or use beyond this immediate project.
- ☐ I have completed the intergenerational learning activity with my child/student.

_____

Parent/Guardian or Community Sampler name

_____ _____/_____/_____

Parent/Guardian or Community Sampler signature Date

_____

Sample Number on Sample Tube