

The Ohio State University in conjunction with the Ohio Department of Health and Ohio EPA has developed an online assessment tool that offers instant water quality interpretation for Ohio residents. This website provides interpretation of water test results you have received from a water testing laboratory.

Getting Started with the Tool

1. Get your laboratory report.
2. Look for the columns labeled “parameter” or “analyte” and “result”.
3. Simply enter your results for each parameter or analyte from the laboratory report into the boxes following the guidelines below. Select the report unit for your result (i.e. ppm, mg/l or µg/L). The parameters below are organized by type which is often how water sample results are grouped on a laboratory report.
4. Click “Submit” at the bottom of the page to get an interpretation of your results.

Click [reading a lab report](#), if you need assistance.

Important Items to Follow When Entering Sample Results

- Enter numerical values - ONLY ENTER NUMBERS - DO NOT ENTER LETTERS.
- If you do not have a value for a particular parameter, or the value is below the reporting limit – commonly indicated by use of a “<” (less than) sign- leave the space blank.
- If you have a result larger than 999 do not enter commas.
- If your water test results contain either ND (not detected) or BD (below detection) enter a zero in the form for that chemical parameter or leave the box blank.
- If your total coliform test result is reported as either P (present) or Positive, enter “1” into the box next to “Total Coliform Bacteria”. If you test result is or A (absent) or Negative, enter “0” in the box labeled “Total Coliform Bacteria”. If you received only presence/absence bacteria results, you might want to consider asking the water testing laboratory to provide you with numerical results in the future. Numerical results provide important clues to the severity and possible causes of bacterial contamination. If you did receive a numerical value for your total coliform test, enter the number next to the box labeled “Total Coliform (counts)”.
- Converting reporting units – Sample results are reported in parts per million (ppm), milligrams per liter (mg/l) or micrograms per liter (µg/L). Results reported in ppm units are equal to mg/L units. Results reported in mg/L can be converted to µg/L units by multiplying by 1,000. For example, 5 mg/l = 5 x 1,000 = 5000 µg/L.
- Definitions of typical laboratory report columns:
 - ✓ ND (no detection) or BD (below detection) means the parameter was not detected in the sample
 - ✓ RL (reporting limit) is basically the smallest concentration a test can detect
 - ✓ MCL (maximum contaminant level) is a USEPA drinking water standard that is also used for health based standards for private water systems in Ohio

Water Testing Information

If you are visiting this site and have not had your water tested, you should arrange to have your water tested through a state certified water testing laboratory. A list of certified labs is available at the Ohio EPA website at <http://www.epa.state.oh.us/ddagw/labcert.aspx>.

For a list of recommended water tests and testing strategies, consult either <http://ohioline.osu.edu/aex-fact/0314.html> or <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/eh/water/PrivateWaterSystems/quality.aspx>