



WELL EDUCATED PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Purpose and Goals:

The Montana State University Extension Water Quality's (MSUEWQ) *Well Educated* program is a statewide initiative developed to help private well owners in Montana understand the quality of their water as it relates to health and quality of life. This program is a collaborative effort between MSUEWQ and partners in participating counties that provides well owners with materials to sample their well water quality. The outcome is a service that helps prevent nonpoint source groundwater contamination from private wells through well owner education while simultaneously providing means to monitor groundwater quality. The Madison Conservation District (MCD) has teamed up with the MSUEWQ to help distribute these well test kits in the Madison Valley.

Why Testing Matters:

Private well owners are responsible for monitoring the quality of their drinking water because private wells are not regulated or routinely monitored by city, county, state, or federal agencies. Routine sampling helps ensure drinking water is safe, even when there are no obvious signs of contamination. The *Well Educated* program is designed to streamline the process to help homeowners readily test and understand their water quality.

How often should your water be tested?

Private well owners should test their water for bacteria and nitrate annually. Additionally, drinking water should be tested if:

- You notice a change in your water's quality, including taste, color, or smell;
- A person drinking the water begins to suffer from an illness that may be waterborne;
- A flood or large storm occurs that could have carried contaminants in your well;
- Maintenance is performed on the well infrastructure;
- Someone who is pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or an infant younger than six months relies on the well for drinking water.

Obtaining a free well testing kit:

Test kits for the *Well Educated* program are available for pickup at the Madison Conservation District office:

222 E Main Street
Lone Elk Office Suites 2B
Ennis, MT 59729
(406) 682-3181

The kits come packaged with a shipping label to the Billings Energy Laboratories and include testing tips and order information.

Test kits and payment for lab analysis must be sent to the Energy Laboratories in Billings, MT.



WELL EDUCATED PROGRAM WELL TESTING COST SHARE OPPORTUNITY

The Madison Conservation District is offering a cost share opportunity in support of the *Well Educated* program's free well testing kits in the Madison Valley.

The Madison Conservation District is offering a 50% cost share (up to \$150) to help Madison Valley residents offset the cost of laboratory analysis through the *Well Educated* program. This opportunity reimburses up to 50% of well testing costs for Madison Valley residents that are within the Madison Conservation District boundaries (for questions about jurisdiction, visit the Madison CD website, or call our office). All residents seeking cost share assistance are required to share their testing results with all entities listed on the *Well Educated* registration form (items I – N). By sharing these results with water resource managers and statewide water quality databases, we can better understand groundwater quality in the Madison Valley and help inform future conservation and water resource management efforts.

Required Application Materials:

Residents seeking cost share assistance for the *Well Educated* program must fill out the *Well Educated* Program Well Testing Cost Share Application form. Cost share assistance is limited to one reimbursement per landowner per calendar year. Cost share applications and reimbursement requests must be submitted within 30 days of receiving Well Educated test results. Submit the following items to Maia Schweikert (maia@madisoncd.org) after you receive your results and interpretations from *Well Educated*:

1. Well Educated Program Well Testing Cost Share Application form
2. Well Educated Registration Form
3. Test Results from Energy Laboratories

If approved, the Madison Conservation District will reimburse the applicant for 50% of eligible laboratory testing costs, up to a maximum of \$150, within 30 days of application approval.

Please reach out to Maia Schweikert at maia@madisoncd.org or (406) 682-3181 for any questions about applying for cost share assistance.

Cost Share applications can be submitted via email to maia@madisoncd.org Or, mailed to the Madison Conservation District, PO Box 606, Ennis, MT 59741 Or, physically dropped off at the office, 222 E Main St, Lone Elk Office Suites 2B, Ennis, MT 59729



Well Educated Program Well Testing Cost Share Application

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

Do you live within the Madison Conservation District? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Length of residency in the Madison Valley: _____

Landowner and/or lessee name, address, telephone (if different than applicant):

How did you hear about this cost share opportunity? _____

Well Location: _____ ¼, _____ ¼, _____ ¼, Section _____, Township _____, Range _____

Nearest Town: _____ OR Latitude/Longitude Coordinates: _____

Are you willing to share your *Well Educated* test results and well location with county health and research organizations and databases? (Items I – N on the *Well Educated* Registration Form): Yes No

Which parameter package(s) will you be testing for? _____

Total cost incurred by the well owner: _____

Total cost requested for reimbursement by MCD (up to 50% or \$150 of total costs): _____

SIGNATURE

I hereby declare that the information and all statements attached to this application are true, complete, and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant: _____

Date: _____

A copy of your *Well Educated* Registration Form and well test results must be turned into the MCD before receiving reimbursement.