

**WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR  
THE SAFETY OF YOUR  
PRIVATE WATER SUPPLY?**

**YOU ARE.**

**Over 1.7 million Virginians, or about one in five people, rely on wells, springs or cisterns.**

Water safety is a common concern for residents using a private water supply. Unlike homes served by public water systems, homeowners using a private water supply are responsible for all aspects of water system management, including routine maintenance, regular water testing, interpretation of test results, and addressing water quantity or quality problems. All private water system owners should take the time to make sure their system is working correctly and ensure their water is safe to drink.

A clean, reliable source of water is not only essential for the health of your family, but also for maintaining property value. Regular water testing and routine water system maintenance are more effective and less expensive than waiting until a problem arises with your drinking water system.

Protect yourself and your family by having your water tested regularly, and have your water system inspected by a qualified well drilling contractor at least every three years. Visit [wellwater.bse.vt.edu/wellcheck](http://wellwater.bse.vt.edu/wellcheck) for more information.

**WORKING TOGETHER TO  
IMPROVE THE WATER QUALITY  
AND HEALTH OF VIRGINIANS**

The Virginia Household Water Quality Program (VAHWQP) provides education and outreach about private water systems to the citizens of Virginia.

Through county drinking water clinics facilitated by trained local Extension agents (with assistance from Well Owner volunteers), participants take samples of their own drinking water, which are sent to a water quality lab at Virginia Tech for analysis. At a follow-up meeting, they receive their confidential water test reports and interpretation of results, and learn about maintenance of water systems and water treatment. Participants also have the opportunity to ask water quality professionals questions specific to their system and results.

**VIRGINIA WELL OWNER  
NETWORK**

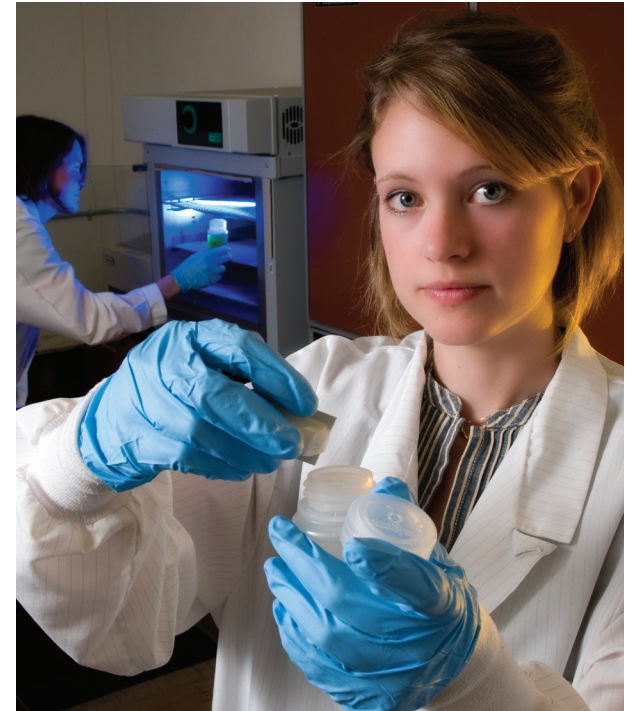
**[wellwater@vt.edu](mailto:wellwater@vt.edu)**

**540-231-9058**

**[www.wellwater.bse.vt.edu](http://www.wellwater.bse.vt.edu)**

**Are you a Master Gardener or  
Master Naturalist? Receive  
seven hours of credits by  
completing the VWON  
training!**

**Virginia Well  
Owner Network**



**Education for protection of  
private home water supplies**

## WHAT IS THE VIRGINIA WELL OWNER NETWORK?

A network of trained Virginia Cooperative Extension Agents, volunteers, and agency collaborators promoting groundwater protection and the proper care of private water systems in Virginia.

## VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

Do you rely on a private water supply such as a well, spring or cistern? Would you like to learn more about your water quality and how best to maintain your water supply system? We are seeking volunteers from across Virginia to join our outreach network!

After completing the required Virginia Well Owner Network (VWON) seven hour training (online or in-person), you will work with local VCE agents or volunteers to educate others in your community about groundwater and their private water supplies. As a VWON volunteer, you will be a resource for other citizens that rely on private water systems. After training, VWON volunteers are asked to try to educate 100 people in the following two years, and provide a brief summary of the type of outreach and education you completed during the year. There are opportunities for continuing education for volunteers!

## VWON TRAINING

VWON volunteers complete a seven hour training session that will either be offered through a series of online modules or during a one-day, in-person training workshop. Those completing the training must receive a score of 80% on an exam given at the end of the training to become part of the network.

Topics covered during the training include:

- Water testing and interpretation of results
- Water treatment
- Water conservation
- Proper well location and construction
- Wellhead protection and land use impacts
- Groundwater flow and quality
- Springs and cisterns
- Drinking water standards and common pollutants
- Education and outreach methods



## OUTREACH & EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Your work as a volunteer may be as simple as talking to friends and family about managing their own water system.

VWON volunteers may:

- Make a presentation to a church, civic or service organization
- Talk to a neighbor or co-worker about well maintenance and water quality
- Staff information booths at home shows or agriculture fairs
- Write an article for a blog or local newspaper
- Share innovative education methods with other volunteers
- Maintain their own water system as a best practices demonstration site
- Assist local Extension agents with conducting a drinking water clinic in your county



[www.ext.vt.edu](http://www.ext.vt.edu)

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, genetic information, marital, family, or veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; Jewel E. Hairston, Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State, Petersburg.