

# Virginia Household Water Quality Program

## 2015 Annual Report



**Virginia  
Cooperative  
Extension**

Virginia Tech  
Virginia State University

The Virginia Household Water Quality Program is a Cooperative Extension effort that provides affordable and confidential water testing and education to the

**1.7 million Virginians** (that's 1 in 5!)

who rely on wells, springs and cisterns for household water. Municipal water supplies are regulated in the U.S., but maintenance, testing and addressing problems with private water supplies are

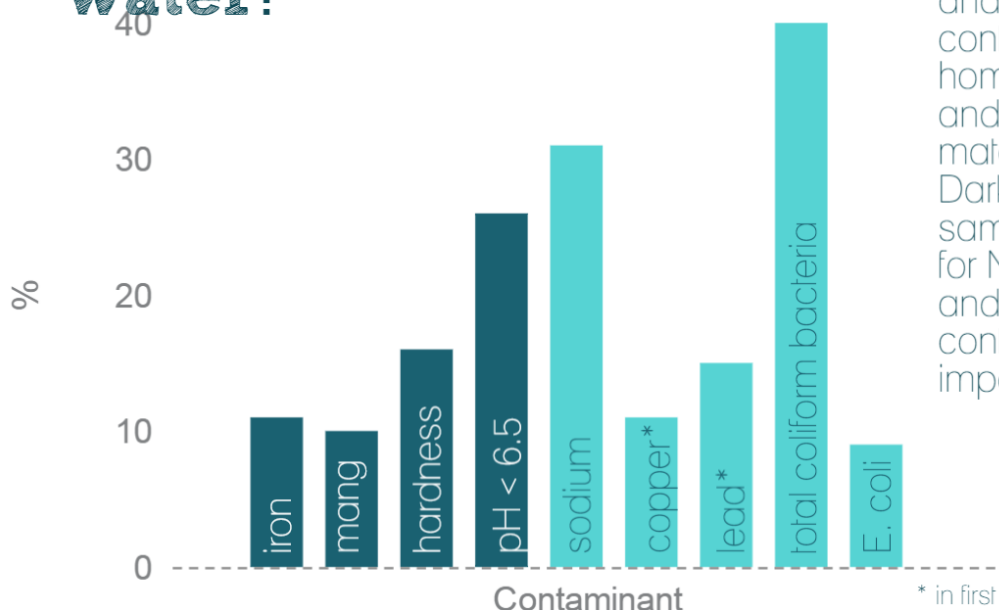
**completely the responsibility of the owner.**



**1726 samples analyzed**

serving 4,182 Virginians in 74 counties

## What's in the water?



Household water quality is driven by geology, well construction and condition, nearby sources of contamination, and, within the home, water treatment devices and composition of plumbing materials.

Dark blue bars represent % of samples exceeding standards for NUISANCE contaminants, and light blue bars signify contaminants with HEALTH impacts.\*\*

\* in first draw household samples

\*\*contaminants found in less than 1% of samples not shown; more information on testing here.

# Value

Participation in a VAHWQP clinic is designed encourage subsequent, annual testing using a commercial lab. If delivered commercially, the value attributed to the 50 VAHWQP drinking water clinics offered in 2016 would be \$586,840. The cost to the 2015 participants was \$86,300, a cost savings of approximately 85%.



Of 2015 participants, 44% report NEVER testing their water before, and 35% report testing only ONCE before.

\*based on estimate of \$20 per analyte

## Impact



78% of participants reported attending the results interpretation meeting; remaining participants were mailed their reports with additional information.



93% of participants stated that they understand their water test results

Participants were asked what recommended actions they planned to take.



24% will shock chlorinate (circulate chlorine through well and plumbing to kill bacteria)



22% will install treatment or improve function of existing treatment devices



12% will improve maintenance of well or spring



11% will use bottled water



10% will seek additional testing

10 = completely agree



**450 kids educated**

It is a challenge to reach busy families with children. In 2015, VAHWQP added a youth component. About 405 kids were reached with hands-on education about groundwater and private water supplies through camps at Virginia Tech and visits to schools.

45 youth came to the Virginia Tech campus with their own water samples, participated in lab activities, learned about food safety, water quality, well construction and associated career opportunities.

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