

# Do you own a well?

If your well water contains...

## Fluorides

### Did you know?

Fluorides are mineral salts that can be found naturally in the ground and dissolved in groundwater.

Water, certain foods and drinks, as well as dental products are the main sources of fluoride exposure.

In small quantities, fluorides act on the mineralisation of teeth, thus protecting them from dental decay.

In Quebec, the standard for fluoride in drinking water is **1.5 mg/L**.

### Caution

Boiling the water will have no effect.

### What are the health risks?

- Exposure to large amounts of fluorides in water can cause fluorosis in children younger than 9 years old. Dental fluorosis appears as permanent stains on teeth, usually white but sometimes brown.
- Exposure to fluoride concentrations greater than 4 mg/L can cause skeletal fluorosis if the water is consumed over many years. Skeletal fluorosis makes bones more fragile and can result in pain and stiffness in the joints.

### When should you do water tests?

- Fluoride analysis should be done at least once during the period your well is in use, either in spring or fall.
- If a water treatment system is installed, an annual fluoride test is recommended to ensure that the system is functioning properly.

### What should you do to protect your health?

- If the fluoride concentration is greater than 1.5 mg/L, to reduce the exposure of children

under the age of 9, it is recommended that another source of water be used for drinking or for drink preparation, including baby formula.

- If the concentration is greater than 4 mg/L, everyone should reduce their exposure by using another source for drinking water and for the preparation of drinks.
- Tap water can be used for food preparation, regular domestic uses and personal hygiene.
- Inform your doctor and dentist that your water contains fluoride.

### What should you do to fix the problem?

- You can install a domestic water treatment device to reduce the concentration of fluorides in the water to an acceptable level. You must be sure to install a certified system that conforms to NSF/ANSI standards and then maintain it following the manufacturer's recommendations.

If you suspect health problems related to the quality of your water, contact **Info-Santé**, by calling 811.

For more information, go to "The Quality of My Well Water" on the MDDELCC website: [mddelcc.gouv.qc.ca](http://mddelcc.gouv.qc.ca)

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