

Drinking from Roadside Springs

How safe is the water?

- **What are roadside springs?** Springs occur where underground water comes out near the surface. Some springs are located along roadsides with public access and pipes that people use. Springs can become contaminated by pollution in the environment and may be unsafe to drink.
- **Is it safe to drink from roadside springs?** No. Water from springs is not routinely tested or monitored to ensure that they meet Safe Drinking Water Act standards. This means that springs may contain a variety of contaminants, many of which have no odor, color, or taste, and can only be detected by laboratory testing or developing symptoms of waterborne illness.
- **Why should I stop drinking this water?** Springs can contain contaminants such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or chemicals that can cause waterborne diseases and pose health risks. Symptoms of waterborne illness may include diarrhea, cramps, nausea, and headaches. Infants, young children, elderly, and those with compromised immune systems are at higher risk.
- **But it looks ok!** Keep in mind that just because water does not have a bad taste, color, and/or odor, that does not mean the water is safe to drink. Many contaminants can only be detected by laboratory tests. The quality of spring water can change rapidly and should be tested before drinking, but even this does not guarantee it can be safely consumed.

When possible, drinking water should come from a regulated public water supply system or a properly installed and maintained private well.

Contact your Local Health Department for further information (<https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dafm/Pages/lhd.aspx>).



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