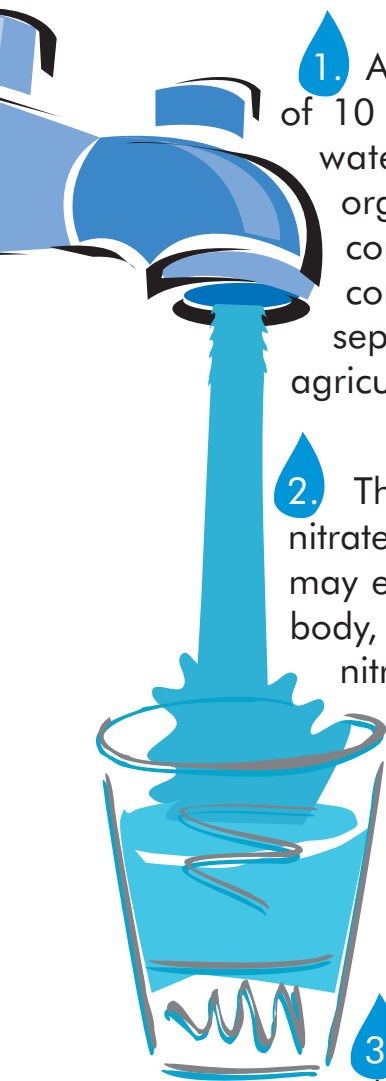




NITRATE IN PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES



1. A nitrate concentration in excess of 10 mg nitrate per litre indicates water contamination from an organic material. Nitrate may come from water that may be contaminated with material from septic tanks, animal manure, and agricultural fertilizers.

2. Those exposed to high levels of nitrates over a long period of time may experience health risks. In the body, nitrates are converted into nitrites. Nitrites are identified as a possible cancer precursor. Children under six months of age are at particular risk of developing a condition known as methaemoglobinaemia (blue baby syndrome).

3. Private well owners/users should meet the Ontario Drinking Water Objectives of a maximum acceptable concentration of 10 mg nitrate per litre.

4. Private water supplies with high nitrate levels may have the concentration of nitrate in their water lowered through investigation and correction of the problem or through the use of a distiller or an alternative source of water. Please consult the Yellow Pages for information on private laboratories for water testing.

5. Levels above the Ontario Drinking Water Objectives of 10 mg nitrate per litre have been found in private well waters in Cambridge Forest Estates, Fournier, Limoges, St. Raphael, Curran, and Marionville.



**For more information, please contact the Eastern Ontario Health Unit
at 933-1375 or at 1 800 267-7120 and ask for Health Line.
Visit our Web site at www.eohu-bseo.on.ca.**

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