



# PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT

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## Town of Lanark Nitrate-nitrogen Screening Results

A free nitrate-nitrogen screening was held on Saturday November 10 and Thursday November 15, 2018. Each session was held for four hours at the Lanark Town Hall. Local residents were invited to bring in a water sample and have their sample screened for a nitrate-nitrogen concentration, free of cost.

Screenings were conducted by the Portage County Water Resource Specialist using a Hach pocket colorimeter for nitrate-nitrogen. In order to do the screening, 5ml of the sample are placed in a vial. A reagent is added to the vial. The pocket colorimeter reads the color in the sample and associates a nitrate-nitrogen concentration with it.

Over the two days of screenings, 40 water samples were screened for nitrate-nitrogen. The average concentration over all the samples was 2 mg/L. The lowest recorded concentration was non-detectable and the highest concentration was 15.7 mg/L. The state and federal drinking water standard is 10 mg/L. Only one sample, the 15.7 mg/L, came back over the drinking water standard. We consider any nitrate-nitrogen concentration below 2 mg/L to be at natural or background levels. Levels above 2 mg/L show that there is some human influence. Seventy five percent, or 30 of the 40 samples, had results below 2 mg/L or below natural background levels of nitrate-nitrogen. County-wide nitrate-nitrogen results showed that 24% of the samples exceeded the drinking water standard for nitrate-nitrogen and 39% of the samples had concentrations below 2 mg/L.

When a sample was close to the drinking water standard, a resident was advised that they should have the sample tested at a certified lab. A screening is not a certified test and if there is a question about results they should be verified by a lab. Any results that exceeded the drinking water standard were advised that infants, small children, and women who are pregnant or thinking of becoming pregnant should avoid any consumption of the water and everyone should avoid long term consumption of the water.

A complete list of the results are attached with this summary. No specific locations of where the samples were taken were recorded. A screening is intended for the purpose of providing the homeowner with information regarding nitrate-nitrogen concentrations in their own drinking water. Since it is a screening and not a certified test, these results should not be used as an official measure of water quality on a large scale.

If you have any further questions regarding the event or the results please feel free to contact me. I look forward to working with the Town of Lanark on future screenings and groundwater issues.

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