

WEEKLY

WATER WATCH

IOWA ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

There are EIGHT beach advisories for the week of 8/9

4 Beaches with E.Coli-Related Advisory:

Backbone Beach (*Dundee, Delaware County, IA*)

Emerson Bay Beach (*Milford, Dickinson County, IA*)

Lake Wapello Beach (*Drakesville, Davis County, IA*)

McIntosh Woods Beach (*Ventura, Cerro Gordo County, IA*)

3 Beaches with a Microcystin-Related Advisory:

Green Valley Beach (*Creston, Union County, IA*)

Honey Creek Resort Beach (*Moravia, Appanoose County, IA*)

Lake of Three Fires Beach (*Bedford, Taylor County, IA*)

Beaches exceeding [the EPA recommendation for microcystin](#) (8 micrograms/L) but not issued an advisory:

Lake Darling Beach (*Brighton, Washington County, IA*)

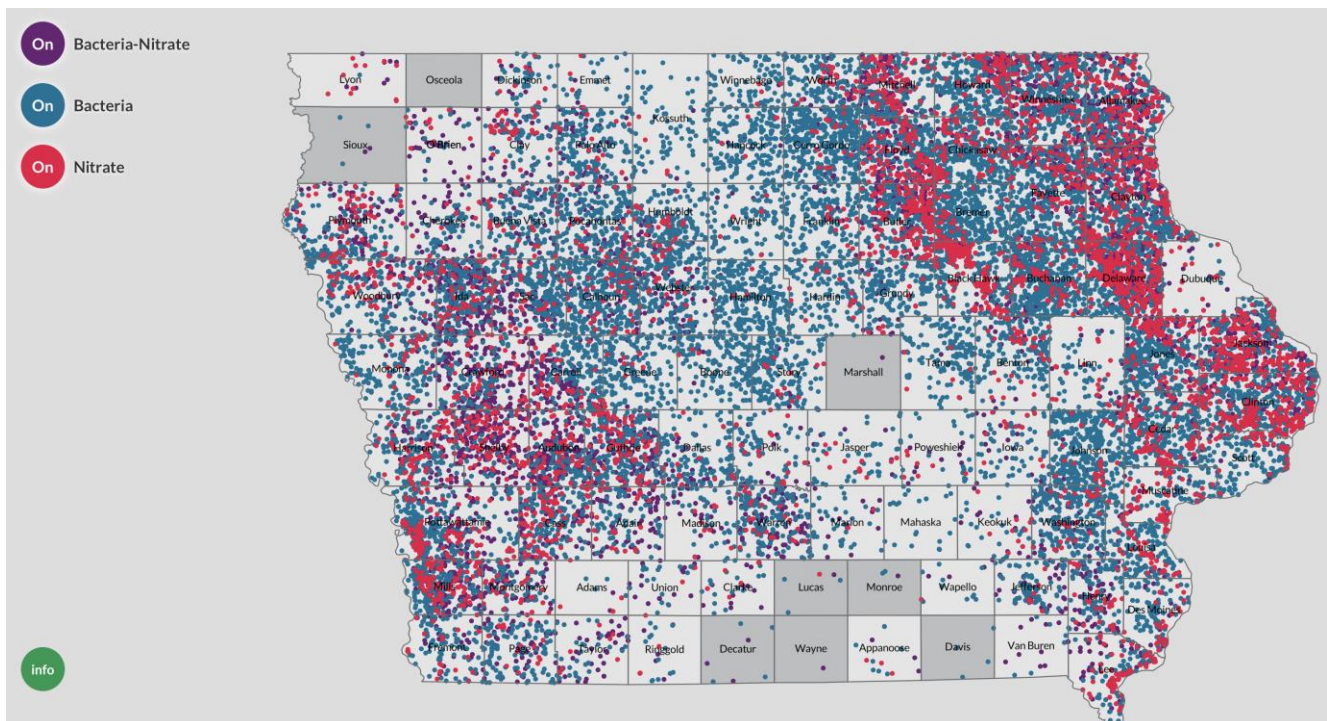
Lake Keomah Beach (*Oskaloosa, Mahaska County, IA*)

Iowa's Private Wells

Nearly 300,000 Iowans rely on private wells as their source of drinking water. Yet only 55,000 wells have been tested for bacteria or nitrate over the last 16 years. The [Environmental Working Group and Iowa Environmental Council released a report](#) this past April detailing the state's well testing data and trends. All of the data came from the Iowa DNR's private wells database.

A few alarming numbers came from the report:

- Of the 55,000 wells tested, **more than 22,000 wells tested positive for coliform bacteria** at least once.
- 12% of wells tested had **nitrate averages at or above the EPA's legal limit** for drinking water systems.
- From 2002 to 2017, **the average nitrate contamination level grew** from 3.1 ppm in 2003 to 5.7 ppm in 2013.



Source: Environmental Working Group.

While the Iowa Department of Natural Resources recommends well testing once a year, only 10 wells were tested every year for nitrate and 12 were tested every year for bacteria. Nearly two-thirds of wells were **only tested once** between 2002 and 2017.

Read [IEC's release](#) and the full [report](#) for more information.

Resources exist to **help offset the cost of well testing**, including the state's [Grants-to-Counties](#) program. This program provides **financial assistance for well testing** in participating counties. Contact your local health department to see if your county participates.

- Grace Holbrook
IEC Water Program

Correction

IEC incorrectly reported in our August 2 Weekly Water Watch on flood wall discussions in Davenport as covered by Iowa Public Radio. The National Weather Service did not advise the city to build a flood wall, but instead encourages the city consider climate impacts as they make decisions. We apologize for this error and encourage you to [read our corrected story](#).

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

[DONATE](#)

[OUR WORK](#)



Iowa Environmental Council

505 Fifth Ave. Suite 850 | Des Moines, Iowa 50309-2317

515-244-1194 | iecmail@iaenvironment.org



Having trouble viewing this email? [View it in your web browser](#)