

## **Abstract**

### **Use of Private Well Water Testing Results Help Determine Aquifer Quality, Identification of Future Public Water Sources and Support Mechanisms.**

by

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Approximately 25% of New Englanders rely on private water wells. Away from the population centers such as New York and Boston, as high as 40% depend upon domestic wells. Some towns do not have any, or sometimes very limited, public water and wastewater infrastructure. Increasingly, rural home buyers are inheriting well water and onsite wastewater systems without the knowledge of historical performance or previous experience for their operations or maintenance.

In Maine, RCAP Solutions has worked with two towns that have actually appropriated funds to conduct aquifer health analysis. Private well water tests were obtained and analyzed to determine base-line contamination typical of an area. This information led to improved and focused water testing routines, indications of contamination sources and helped determine filtering and treatment options. GIS supported water source protection by the use of data overlays showing how potential public aquifers, wildlife habitats and recreational areas could coincide.

A win-win-win-win opportunity exists. Regardless of public water service existing, town officials required a detailed, ongoing review of their aquifer distribution and health to improve placement and category planning of various developments. Additionally, homeowners understood what contaminates to test in their water to ensure their health and consequently realize they have the responsibility of a "very small utility" operator. And lastly, financial institutions can benefit from this information to improve fair market value judgments of their mortgaged assets.

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