Fall Well Testing Results

The Driftless Area Water Study of Crawford, Richland and Vernon counties just conducted its first round of private well-water testing to gather data on the quality of drinking waste in these counties. 293 samples were collected from homeowners throughout the tri-county area. Crawford County tested 89 wells, Richland County tested 79 wells and Vernon County tested 125 wells. The counties worked with the UW-Stevens Point Center for Watershed Science and Education to coordinate the private well-testing project. Participating homeowners were asked to collect their water samples on the morning of October 26th and take them to one of the drop off sites. The samples were all taken to the Water and Environmental Analysis Lab in Stevens Point early the next morning. The testing was conducted that day. Results have been mailed out the participants.

RICHLAND COUNTY SPECIFICS: There are approximately 4, 175 private wells in Richland County. Letters were sent to 400 randomly chosen well owners, asking for their participation in this sample collection. The first 95 to respond and pick up vials were allowed to participate. There were 79 that actually returned samples for testing. The cost of the testing was $55 and it was paid for by Richland County Land Conservation department.

Overall, of the 293 well sample collected in the tri-county area, 7.8% of the wells tested had nitrate-nitrogen greater than the 10 mg/L nitrate-nitrogen, 23.5% of the well tested positive for coliform bacteria with 2.7% of the wells testing positive for E. coli bacteria. In Richland County, of the 79 well samples collected, 14% of them testing greater than 10 mg/L nitrate-nitrogen, 32% tested positive for coliform bacteria with 1% testing positive for E. coli bacteria. Nitrate-nitrogen above 10 mg/L can pose health risks if consumed by infants, pregnant women and women trying to become pregnant. Routine coliform bacteria testing can be used as an indication of whether a well is capable of producing sanitary or bacteria safe water. The presence of E. coli in a water sample is conclusive evidence of fecal contamination in the well. Source tracking was not conducted as part of this project so the sources of E. coli are not known.

The 3 counties are looking at conducting another round of sampling in the spring of 2021, tentatively scheduled for April.

Richland

Nitrate (mg/L as N)

	Number	%
None Detected	13	16%
<= 2.0	32	41%
2.1 -5.0	15	19%
5.1-10.0	8	10%
10.1-20.0	8	10%
>20.0	3	4%

Average: 4 for 79 Samples

Coliform Bacteria	25	32%
E. Coli Positives of the Coliform pos.	1	4%

Crawford-Richland-Vernon

Nitrate (mg/L as N)

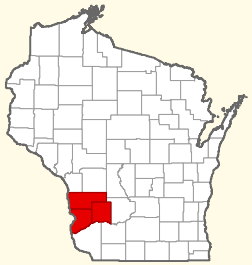
	Number	%
None Detected	52	18%
<= 2.0	89	30%
2.1 -5.0	84	29%
5.1-10.0	45	15%
10.1-20.0	20	7%
>20.0	3	1%

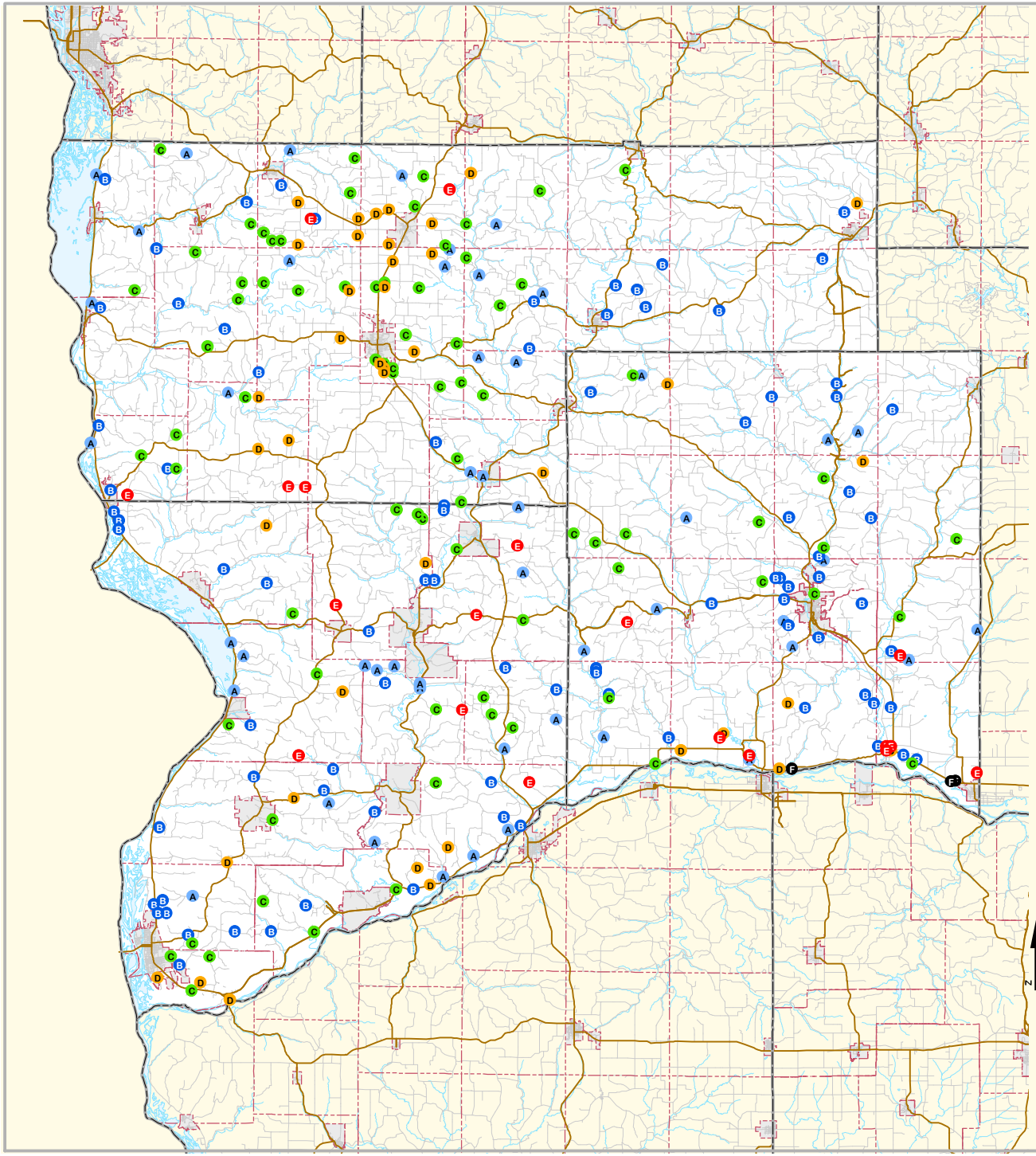
Average: 3.4 for 293 Samples

Coliform Bacteria	69	24%
E. Coli Positives of the Coliform pos.	8	12%

Crawford, Richland and Vernon Counties

October 2020





NITRATE-NITRITE (ppm N)

A	None Detected	52	18 %
B	... 2.0	89	30 %
C	2.1 - 5.0	84	29 %
D	5.1 - 10.0	45	15 %
E	10.1 - 20.0	20	7 %
F	20.1 ...	3	1 %

Mapped value is the average for the 1/4 1/4 section
Treated samples not mapped

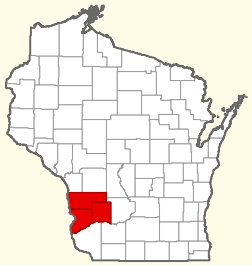
0 5 10 Miles

0 5 10 Kilometers

Center for Watershed Science and Education
College of Natural Resources
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Crawford, Richland and Vernon Counties

October 2020



* **BACTERIA POSITIVE**

Any sample in the 1/4 1/4 section

0 5 10 Miles

0 5 10 Kilometers

N

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