



JULY 2019

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**PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW
MAILING ADDRESS BELOW**

**WAKE COUNTY
MEDICAL SOCIETY**

3434 Edwards Mill Road
Suite 112
Raleigh, NC 27612
Phone 919-923-2442
www.wakedocs.org

Wake County Water Contaminants and Wells:
what health care providers need to know

Well water isn't just water. Well water is a mixture of chemicals and microorganisms in solution. The concentration of each depends on multiple factors including:

- naturally occurring chemicals from underground soil and rocks
- human-made chemicals from industrial sites, farms or gas stations
- microorganisms in surface water or septic runoff

In June 2009, The American Academy of Pediatrics issued a policy statement that called for better information that health care providers can share with their patients about well water*. In keeping with that call, Wake County Environmental Services (WCES) wants to help health care providers by providing information about well water safety.

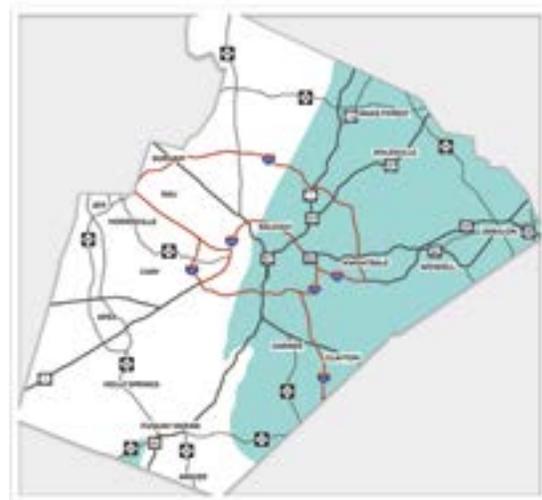
In Wake County:

- 15% of residents rely on private wells for their water supply at home
- One time required testing for new wells does not cover all contaminants and may not reflect current water quality
- After construction, private well testing for contaminants is the responsibility of the well owner
- < 10% of wells are ever tested again after the initial testing

- Water that looks, tastes, and smells fine can contain unhealthy levels of contaminants
- Testing is the only way to make sure well water that is safe to drink and use

After years of testing, Wake County Environmental Services (WCES) now knows:

- > 10% of wells have unsafe levels of uranium and other radioactive elements. These elements are associated with increased risk of kidney toxicity and certain cancers.
- Most of the unsafe wells are found in the eastern half and southernmost tip of Wake County (shown in green on map)



An estimated 1 in 5 wells in the green areas may have unsafe levels of contamination due to underground rock.

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July 2019

Tuesday, July 16-

Dix Park Tour:

Members will take a trolley tour of the new Dix Park Campus. A light dinner will be served to all participants. *Please note that this tour is full. Other tour dates may be offered in the future.*

Tuesday, July 23-

Wake County Medical Society Book Club:

You are invited to join the WCMS at their Book Club discussion of the #1 New York Times Bestseller *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lax* by Rebecca Skloot

Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor black tobacco farmer whose cells—taken without her knowledge in 1951—became one of the most important tools in medicine, vital for developing the polio vaccine, cloning, gene mapping, and more. Henrietta's cells have been bought and sold by the billions, yet she remains virtually unknown, and her family can't afford health insurance. This phenomenal New York Times bestseller tells a riveting story of the collision between ethics, race, and medicine; of scientific discovery and faith healing; and of a daughter consumed with questions about the mother she never knew.

-The New York Times

September 2019

September Date TBD

Annual Picnic with the WCMS Alliance

September Date TBD

Wake County Medical Society visit to the Raleigh Islamic Center

- Other contaminants may be found in wells anywhere in the county, including coliform bacteria, nitrate, fluoride, and man-made chemicals such as pesticides, solvents, and petroleum compounds.

Since most wells in the county have never been tested, it is likely that well users are being exposed to contaminants without knowing it.

How YOU can help:

- Ask your patients about their water source for both drinking and use.
- Educate your patients who use well water about the importance of getting their well tested regularly for bacteria and other contaminants.
- Review the information on the attached card with them, give them the card and encourage them to get their well tested.
- Make a note to follow up by asking your patients whether they got their wells tested, the results and any mitigation they've had done at subsequent visits to your office.

Thank you for your help in protecting the health of well users in Wake County!

* links to <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/123/6/1599.full.pdf> and <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/123/6/e1123.full.pdf>



The Wake County Medical Society April 2019 Book Club meeting

Dopesick was the selected book for this session. The book covering the early days of the opioid epidemic in rural America through the epidemic that eventually covered the entire nation. The discussion addressed the history of pain management beginning with the early 1990s, from the physician participant's perspective, and what role this factor might have played as a part of the epidemic.



WCMS & WCMS Alliance Luncheon and Duke Gardens Tour

The Wake County Medical Society sponsored a luncheon and guided Duke Garden tour on the afternoon of April 7, 2019. The Garden was in full bloom and breathtaking to behold. A luncheon was served in the Duke Gardens elegant meeting complex with catering by Saladilia of Durham prior to the tour. Medical Society members and members of the WCMS Alliance attended along with their family members. A trolley vehicle was available for those needing assistance. It was a beautiful day for all.