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**FOR RELEASE THE WEEK OF:
Immediate Release**

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Free Private well Water Sampling:

The Iroquois County Public Health Department will continue to offer free water sample test kits until further notice. Testing for coliform bacteria will reveal whether your water supply may be contaminated with infectious organisms, but it will not provide a direct measure of pathogenic, or disease-causing, bacteria. Specific disease-producing organisms present in the water are not easily identified, and testing for these organisms in the laboratory is complex and time consuming. Coliform bacteria, on the other hand, can easily be identified in the laboratory and are used as an indicator of the bacteriological quality of water. Some members of the coliform indicator group occur naturally in the intestines of humans as well as other warm-blooded animals and are discharged in great numbers in human and animal waste. Others occur naturally in surface water of varying quality and in topsoil. A positive analysis for coliform bacteria indicates that the well sample may have been contaminated by surface water or fecal material. This may suggest that the water well may not be properly constructed to protect it from sources of bacteriological contamination. Negative results indicate there was no contamination at the time of sampling.

31 percent of the private water samples submitted from Iroquois County this year in have been unsatisfactory for Coliform bacteria.

Please stop in at our office located at 1001 East Grant Street, Watseka, Illinois. 8:30 am-4:30 pm Monday through Friday to pick up your free test kit.

Mr. Eimen also recommends that well owners:

- Keep hazardous chemicals, such as paint, fertilizer, pesticides, and motor oil far away from your well, and maintain a "clean" zone of at least 50 feet between your well and any kennels and livestock operations.
- Maintain proper separation between your well and buildings, waste systems, and chemical storage areas.
- Periodically check the well cover or well cap on top of the casing (well) to ensure it is in good repair and securely attached. Its seal should keep out insects and rodents.
- Keep your well records in a safe place. These include the construction report, and annual water well system maintenance and water testing results.

For further information, please contact Iroquois County Public Health Department at (815) 432-2483.