

JUST ONE THING

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Company/Organization: NH Department of Environmental Services

Type of Organization: Nonprofit organization

Number of Employees: 470

Category: Community

Challenge or Opportunity: Public water systems are regulated under federal and state laws, but nearly half of NH residents use unregulated private wells at home. About one in four of those wells has harmful levels of naturally occurring arsenic, which is particularly harmful to developing fetuses, pregnant women, and young children. Many can't afford water testing.

Approach or Solution: NHDES is partnering with the state WIC program and WIC clinics to provide free arsenic testing to low-income pregnant women with private wells, and to provide free filter pitchers and replacement cartridges for 3 years if their water has a high level of arsenic.

Impact: We just rolled out the testing program in September 2020, so no results yet, but we expect to reduce arsenic in drinking water for more than 400 families over the course of the project, and we hope to then scale it up to a broader population.