



Cobalt

If the level of cobalt in your water is over **40 µg/L**, you should find a different source of water for drinking and preparing foods that take up a lot of water.*

What is cobalt?

Cobalt is a naturally occurring element found in rocks, soil, water, plants, and animals.

- ▶ Cobalt substances are used in many industrial purposes including the production of stainless steel, pigments, and metal finishing.
- ▶ People can be exposed to cobalt from air, food, and water.

Can cobalt affect our health?

Studies among people and in research animals have shown that cobalt can cause health effects.

- ▶ People exposed to high levels of cobalt have had lung and heart problems.
- ▶ Studies in research animals have also shown that high levels of cobalt can cause liver and kidney damage and birth defects.

What can you do to protect your health?

Wisconsin has a groundwater standard of 40 micrograms per liter (µg/L) for cobalt.

If the level of cobalt in your drinking water is above this, you should find a way to obtain safe water. Options include:

- ▶ Installing a certified treatment device.
- ▶ Drilling a new well.
- ▶ Connecting to a public water system or community well.

*Examples of foods that take up a lot of water include soup, rice, jello, and oatmeal.

Looking for more information?

- ▶ See the [factsheet](#) by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease registry for additional health information.
- ▶ Visit the [DHS website](#) for more information on Wisconsin's groundwater standards.

