SAFE WATCH

SAFE WATER FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH

Safer Well Water through Stronger Public Health Programs
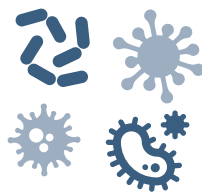
Learn how CDC works with health departments to protect communities from unsafe well water.

The Issue

1 of 9

About 1 in 9 Americans get their drinking water from a private well.

Germs, chemicals, or radionuclides can impact wells and other private drinking water sources.

1 of 5

About 1 in 5 sampled private wells had contaminants at levels that could affect health.

Making Programs Stronger

Safe WATCH works with well water programs at health departments to help them improve their services, like

Investigating common contaminants that can affect health.

Educating well owners about testing their water and interpreting test results.

Linking homeowners with services, treatment systems, and other resources to make their water safer.

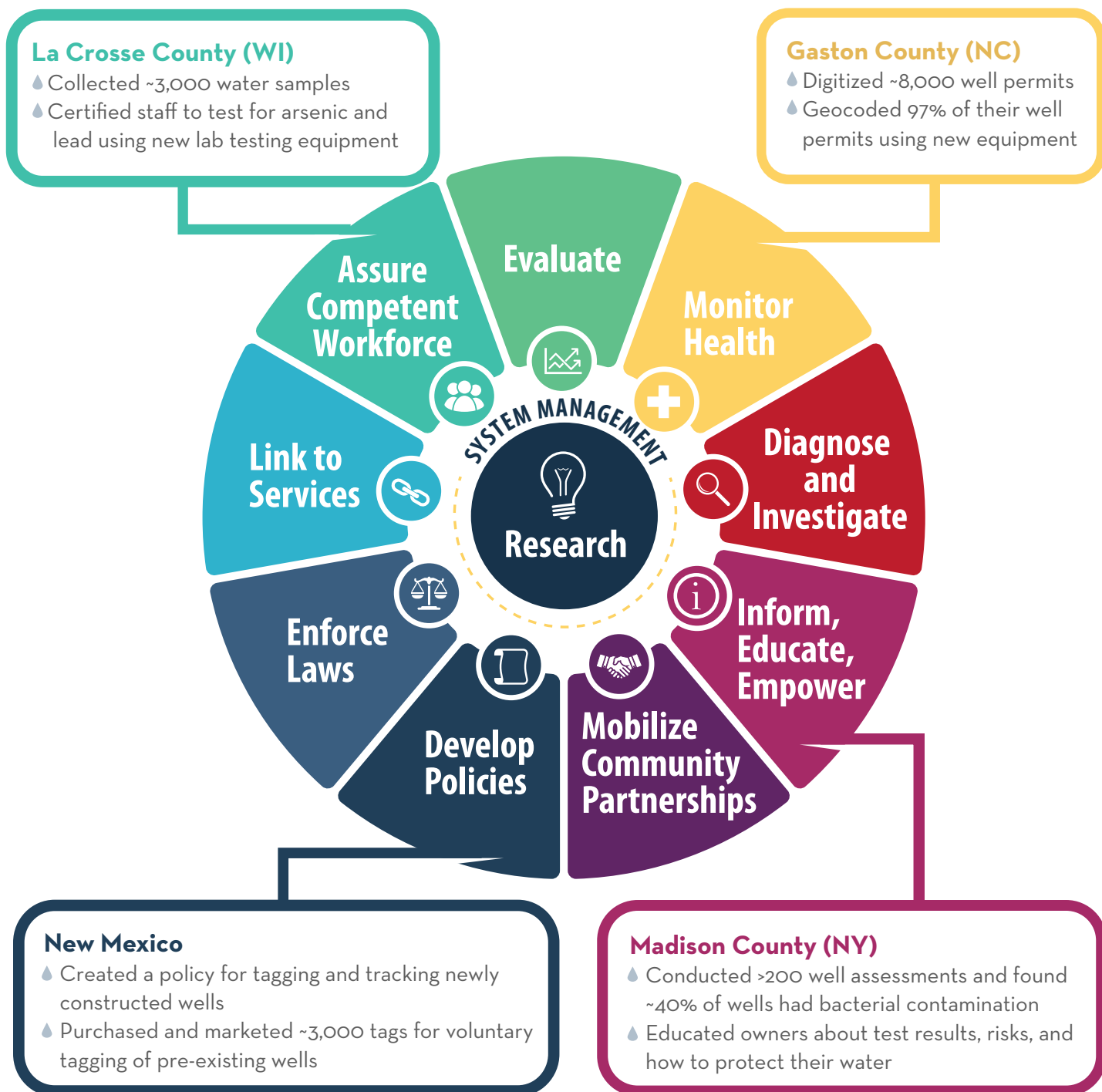**Partnering** with labs, well drillers, universities, and others.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Safe WATCH Grantees Improve Services

CDC Safe WATCH helps health departments strengthen and improve their programs by
- Identifying gaps in their program using the 10 Essential Environmental Public Health Services.
- Taking actions to close gaps and reduce exposures to contaminants.

La Crosse County (WI)
- Collected ~3,000 water samples
- Certified staff to test for arsenic and lead using new lab testing equipment

Gaston County (NC)
- Digitized ~8,000 well permits
- Geocoded 97% of their well permits using new equipment

Evaluate

Assure Competent Workforce

Monitor Health

Link to Services

SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

Research

Diagnose and Investigate

Enforce Laws

Inform, Educate, Empower

Develop Policies

Mobilize Community Partnerships

New Mexico
- Created a policy for tagging and tracking newly constructed wells
- Purchased and marketed ~3,000 tags for voluntary tagging of pre-existing wells

Madison County (NY)
- Conducted >200 well assessments and found ~40% of wells had bacterial contamination
- Educated owners about test results, risks, and how to protect their water

Learn More
www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/safe-watch