

Free Drinking Water Sources:

Southern and Central Illinois

While there are few public outlets dedicated specifically to free drinking water, here are some accessible options you can explore:

1. Municipal Parks (Public Spigots & Facilities)

Many municipal parks in the region offer water access—usually through restrooms, splash pads, or potable spigots—available to visitors at no cost. These include:

- Edwardsville Parks: The city maintains a network of well-equipped parks open daily (6 AM–10 PM) .
- Glen Carbon Parks: Parks like Miner Park and Schon Park offer restroom facilities, which may have potable water access .

Tip: Before relying on park water, check signage or confirm with local authorities to ensure the spigots are safe for drinking.

2. Schools with Hydration Stations

H2O On the Go Program: Several schools—including in Madison County—received grant-funded water bottle filling stations. These shelters provide clean, filtered water for students and staff . Good to know: These are located inside school buildings and typically not available to the general public, but they demonstrate how public investment can increase access to safe drinking water.

3. Help with Private Well Testing & Sample Kits

State of Illinois- Private Well Testing [Well Testing Illinois](#)

Most local health departments can help test for bacteria and nitrate. Find your local health department by searching the internet or go to the Illinois [health department directory](#). Testing for contaminants can be expensive. **IDPH can help interpret test results and provide appropriate recommendations for free.** IDPH cannot require you to test your well, install treatment, or keep you from using your well.

4. Water Utilities & Public Water Infrastructure

North East Central County Public Water District (Edwardsville, Madison County) provides reliable drinking water to thousands of residents .

Illinois-American Water serves much of the Metro East area, including parts of St. Clair County. They often offer discounted rates or assistance programs for income-qualified residents—not free water, but potential support .

Bond Madison Water -

https://water.epa.state.il.us/dww/JSP/WaterSystemDetail.jsp?tinwsys_is_number=715890&tinwsys_st_code=IL&wsnumber=IL0050020

Bond Madison Water Company provides clean potable water to residents and businesses in Bond and Madison Counties, ensuring a reliable and safe water supply at the lowest possible cost.

You can use the Illinois EPA’s Drinking Water Watch portal to look up public water systems, quality data, and operator contacts for local communities.

<https://water.epa.state.il.us/dww/index.jsp>

5. State Park Water Spigots

Parks across southern Illinois—including state parks and trailheads—typically offer free potable water via public spigots or faucets. These are commonly found near picnic areas or dump stations.

Important: Some spigots are labeled non-potable due to possible lead in fittings or hose attachments. Always verify with signage or park staff before consumption.

6 Clear Lake Township Water Fill Station

Located in southern Illinois Sangamon County (near Rochester), this station is publicly available 24 hours a day and was established with the Sugar Creek Water District. It’s 100% free, but requires a 3-inch hose connection to use.

https://www.clearlaketownship.net/services_waterstation.cfm

7. Hidden Springs State Forest

Named for its seven natural drinking springs, this forest in Shelby County offers a historical source of free water. While used historically by early settlers, current accessibility and safety for consumption may vary.

<https://dnr.illinois.gov/parks/park.hiddensprings.html>

8. Illinois Office of Water Resources

<https://dnr.illinois.gov/waterresources/missionandstructure.html>

The Office of Water Resources is the lead state agency for water resources planning, navigation, floodplain management, the National Flood Insurance Program, water supply, drought, and interstate organizations on water resources.

9. Illinois Water Supply Information

This guide is intended to help citizens of Illinois find information about Illinois water supplies. It includes information resources from the state and federal government, news sources, and library holdings, including digital collections.

<https://guides.library.illinois.edu/ILH2Osupply/mydrinkingwater>

At-a-Glance Overview

Source Type	Availability/Location	Notes
Park spigots/restrooms	Public parks in Edwardsville & Glen Carbon	Likely potable but verify before use
School hydration stations	Specific schools (e.g., Collinsville area)	For students—typically not public access
Well testing (St. Clair)	Health Dept office (Belleville)	Free testing—no direct water provided
Public water utilities	Madison & St. Clair Counties	Utilities provide service; assistance programs exist
Drinking Water Watch portal	Online search tool by county/community	Explore water quality & systems for free
Clear Lake Township Fill Station	24/7 with hose needed	Municipal-treated water—safe for drinking
State Park Spigots	Seasonal/public	Often potable, but always confirm before drinking
Hidden Springs Forest	Historic springs	May be untreated and subject to seasonal changes
Bottoms Spring	Community-sourced	Likely untreated; possible contamination—treat before use

Recommendations

- Need immediate drinking water access? Visit city parks during open hours—you may find restrooms or potable drip points suitable for refills.
- Home well? Take advantage of St. Clair County's free testing service to ensure safe water.
- Looking for service assistance? Contact your local water utility to learn about customer assistance or discounted programs.
- Research further? Use the Illinois EPA's Drinking Water Watch tool for data on your county's public water systems and quality reports.

