



MassDEP
Drinking Water Program
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Program.Director-DWP@mass.gov or 617-292-5770

The Drinking Water Updates can be found on-line at:
mass.gov/lists/communication-to-public-water-suppliers
or at the Statehouse Archives at: <https://archives.lib.state.ma.us/handle/2452/826119>



Autumn Country Barn (cropped) <http://www.forestwander.com/website-terms/>

Drinking Water Program Updates

2020-11-06

This week's program director email has these topics of interest:

1. MassDEP COVID-19 Information
 - Important update from Governor Baker as of 11-2-2020
 - MassDEP Public Water Supply Information
 - MassDEP COVID-19 Conference Calls
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 - Get all your PFAS Questions Answered
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 - Assisting public surface water supplies to prepare for and respond to cyanobacteria
6. EPA Awards Approximately \$90 M to Address Water Infrastructure in Massachusetts
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8. Sodium Q and A
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10. Training

MassDEP COVID-19 Information

For all information go to <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-state-of-emergency> .

Sign-up for the state messaging tool called “AlertsMA” which sends real-time notifications of COVID-19 alerts. To subscribe to these real-time notifications text the keyword **COVIDMA** to **888-777**. After signing up, you will receive short messages and links to information on your cell phone or other mobile device.

Masks and Face Coverings: On May 1, Governor Baker issued an order requiring the use of masks or face coverings in public situations when appropriate social distancing measures are not possible. Order | Guidance

Phase 3, Step 2 (as of October 5, 2020) - Re-opening Massachusetts

Until a treatment or vaccine for COVID-19 is available, life will not return to normal. We each have a collective responsibility to ensure that reopening proceeds smoothly and safely. Everyone must follow public health directives and use common sense to protect yourself, your family, your neighbors, and vulnerable populations across the Commonwealth.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/reopening-massachusetts>

Important update from Governor Baker as of 11-2-2020

New COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations have been increasing over the past several weeks, with cases up by 278% and hospitalizations up by 145% since Labor Day.

To disrupt this trend, the Governor announced a series of important new measures, including:

- A revised Stay-at-Home Advisory to ensure residents avoid unnecessary activities that can lead to increased COVID-19 transmission. The revised Stay-at-Home Advisory instructs residents to stay home between 10 PM and 5 AM. The Advisory allows for activities such as going to work, running critical errands to get groceries and address health needs, and taking a walk.
- A new executive order that requires the early closure of certain businesses and activities each night at 9:30 PM.
- A revised face covering order that requires all persons to wear face-coverings in all public places, even where they can maintain 6 feet of distance from others.
- A revised gatherings order was announced which reduces the gathering size limit for gatherings at private residences: indoor gatherings at private residences are now limited to 10 people and outdoor gatherings at private residences are limited to 25 people. The limit on gatherings held in public spaces and at event venues (e.g., wedding venues) remains the same. The new order

also requires that all gatherings (regardless of size or location) must end and disperse by 9:30 PM.

MassDEP Public Water Supply Information

MassDEP is coordinating with the water supply industries, agencies, and organizations to provide information about the impacts of COVID-19 in Massachusetts.

- Recorded weekly meetings with Commissioner Suuberg: [Water Suppliers Meetings on COVID-19](#)
- Questions from drinking water operators answered by MassDEP [Water Supplier FAQs](#) Updated 10/5/2020
- [Bacteria sampling at outside taps/spigots/hose bibs](#) (PDF 97 KB)
- [Bacteria sampling at hydrants using hydrant sampler](#) (PDF 87 KB)
- [Mitigating lead and copper levels in facilities after school closure due to COVID-19](#) (PDF 115 KB)
- Emergency Certification for Public Water System Temporary Closure (Non-Operational Status) For Non-Community (TNC/NTNC) public water suppliers ([Word 40KB](#)) ([PDF 149 KB](#))
- Drinking Water Operator license Extension Guidance during the public health emergency <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/guidance-regarding-the-orders-by-the-governor-extending-certain-occupational-and>
- MassDEP Building Flushing Information <https://www.mass.gov/doc/massdep-building-flushing-information>
- Form to document non-compliance related to COVID-19 <https://www.mass.gov/doc/documentation-for-failure-to-comply-with-a-requirement-as-a-result-of-the-covid-19-emergency>
- Information on Training for Public Water Suppliers <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drinking-water-training>

Reminder: Please note that during the COVID-19 pandemic that MassDEP staff are generally working remotely. MassDEP-DWP cannot guarantee that posted hardcopy submittals will be delivered or received as expected. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to use eDEP, if available, for water quality monitoring reporting or if you mail in reports to also submit a PDF copy of the report by email to Program.Director-DWP@mass.gov. The subject line should include the PWSID, City/Town and type of report (e.g., 3035000 Boston Bacteria Report). Continue to mail the official hardcopy to the appropriate MassDEP Regional office but indicate on the cover letter or similar enclosure that the report(s) was sent in via email and include the date of the email.

MassDEP COVID-19 Conference Calls

MassDEP's Commissioner Suuberg is now holding monthly Zoom conference calls to all operators and interested parties. Here is a link to MassDEP's webpage, where recordings of Commissioner Suuberg's calls with the operators as well as FAQs for both water supply and wastewater are published: <https://www.mass.gov/lists/covid-19-information-for-drinking-water-and-wastewater->

[operators](#). MassDEP will continue to populate this webpage with other relevant information related to the COVID-19 crisis.

These calls are now on a monthly schedule.

The next call with Commissioner Suuberg is scheduled for Tuesday, December 1, 2020 at 2 PM. Please email all drinking water questions to MassDEP at program.director-dwp@mass.gov.

Zoom Meeting Information

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly: https://zoom.us/meeting/uJEtf-isqzstGhSf_beAtiSdfHxE-69rQ/ics?icsToken=98tyKuytrjMrHtGVt1z9d7lvW4X-b-HyllZGmaVinhREfYlgZgXeLsdGf-QmAumB

Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/550814507> Meeting ID: 550 814 507

One tap mobile

+19294362866,,550814507# US (New York)

+13126266799,,550814507# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location

+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 301 715 8592 US

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US

Meeting ID: 550 814 507

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/anAJCjR7G>

EPA COVID-19 Information

EPA COVID-19 <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus>

Last Chance for Free Cloth Masks

Thanks to the generosity of the state of New Hampshire, a third round of cloth mask distribution is being offered again to continue supporting safe operations.

If your system is currently in need of cloth masks or is planning for future need, please reserve masks for your system by completing the survey form at this link: <https://www.mass.gov/forms/drinking-water-and-wastewater-sector-personal-protective-equipment-ppe-distribution-survey> as soon as possible, but by November 6, 2020. Please submit only one survey response per utility or contract operations firm. If you have any questions about cloth mask availability, please contact Kristin Divris at Kristin.Divris@mass.gov or 508-887-0021.

EPA's COVID-19 Survey

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has released a voluntary COVID-19 survey to selected drinking water facilities to help assess the economic and operational challenges faced by the nation's water and wastewater systems as a result of COVID-19. This is a voluntary survey which hopes to identify the severity of the past, current, and future challenges faced by water utilities and hopes to collect information that would facilitate planning for a rapid response, if necessary, should there be significant future challenges due to COVID-19.

If you are one of the selected PWSs please send in your survey by Friday November 6, 2020.

Alert: Ransomware Attack on US Water Utility

On October 29, a large water and wastewater utility in the United States was victimized by a cyber ransomware attack. The risk of additional water and wastewater sector facilities being attacked by this threat is high. The WaterISAC has published an Advisory (here) in response to this incident. The Advisory describes what happened, recommended actions to reduce risk, and additional resources. The WaterISAC has graciously permitted the distribution of this Advisory across the water and wastewater systems sector.

Questions regarding this Advisory may be directed to WaterISAC at analyst.waterisac.org. Cybersecurity incidents should be reported to the DHS Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency at <https://us-cert.cisa.gov/forms/report> and WaterISAC at: <https://www.waterisac.org/report-incident>.

Remember, if you receive an email from the state the email address will be in the firstname.lastname@mass.gov format. If it is not, do not open or click on any links as it most probably is spam.

PFAS

Get all your PFAS Questions Answered

DWP PFAS Clearinghouse

As the MassDEP Drinking Water Program implements the PFAS regulations, we welcome your questions about PFAS and the new PFAS Drinking Water Regulations. To best track and ensure timely answers to questions, the DWP has established a clearinghouse for all PFAS questions. If you have questions about PFAS, the PFAS regulations, or their implementation, please send or copy your questions to program.director-dwp@mass.gov : Subject PFAS, so that they can be directed to the proper staff and answered promptly.

Free PFAS Sampling

And remember there is free PFAS testing. Visit <https://www.mass.gov/forms/pfas-free-sampling-initiative-notice-of-interest-form-for-public-water-systems> to sign up for the Free PFAS Lab Analyses Program, or send a request with the information described in the survey (e.g., PWS name, PWS ID#, number of sources already tested, number of sources to be tested, and system population) to program.director-dwp@mass.gov, Subject: "Free PFAS Lab Analyses Program - Sampling questions".

Taking advantage of the free sampling now will save your PWS approximately \$300 per sample. You will also be able to apply for grants or loans to install PFAS treatment which will only be available for a limited time.

RTCR - Routine Coliform Monitoring

and Populations Greater than 4900

This is a reminder for community PWSs that the Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR) states in 310 CMR 22.05 (1)(a) "Each Supplier of Water shall collect total coliform samples at sites which are representative of water throughout the Distribution System, at the entry point to the distribution system, and at storage facilities".

Furthermore (summarized), entry point samples and storage facilities samples shall be collected in addition to the minimum number of samples collected (based on population). Raw water sampling shall be collected on the same day as any one of its required distribution samples.

Per 310 CMR 22.05 (1)(a)3.a. "A Supplier of Water shall collect samples at regular time intervals throughout the month, except that a Supplier of Water, whose Public Water System uses only groundwater and serves 4,900 persons or fewer, may collect all required samples on a single day if they are taken from different sampling locations." Please note: this is within the context of routine sampling based on population (see [EPA Quick Reference Guide for RTCR](#)), since EPA RTCR requirements do not specifically include entry point, storage facilities, and raw water sampling.

Please review your Summer (April – September) and Winter (October – March) populations and your bacteriological monitoring practices; adjust monitoring to meet these requirements if you are not already doing so.

One thing to remember, it is recommended to collect source water/entry point samples with each set of distribution samples to aid compliance with the Ground Water Rule. That is, if a system >3300 has a total coliform positive sample in the distribution system, they would trigger enterococci testing at each (non 4 -log approved) active source within 24 hours (unless they collected coliform samples from the sources on the same day as the distribution samples).

Please contact your local regional office if you have any questions regarding your RTCR sampling requirements.

Harmful Algal Blooms Updates

Assisting public surface water supplies to prepare for and respond to cyanobacteria

MassDEP has updated several documents related to cyanobacteria (CyanoHABs) and sent this information as a special email to PWSs with surface water supplies on October 30th, 2020. MassDEP recommends using the information below to update source water protection and emergency response plans in preparation for possible future CyanoHAB events. These resources include:

- **Drinking Water Program letter to public surface water systems found at:** <https://www.mass.gov/doc/drinking-water-program-letter-to-public-water-systems>
- **Fact sheet for Cyanobacteria and Public Drinking Water Supplies in Massachusetts found at:** <https://www.mass.gov/doc/public-water-system-fact-sheet-cyanobacteria-and-public-drinking-water-supplies-in>
- **PWS Bloom Tracking Form** – a technical assistance tool for boundary use found at: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/public-water-system-bloom-tracking-form>
- **Cyanobacteria Guidance for PWSs found at:** <http://www.mass.gov/doc/massdep-guidance-cyanobacteria-and-public-water-systems>
- **New - Notification of Copper Algicide Application found at:** <https://www.mass.gov/lists/source-water-protection-forms-and-templates>

In addition, an updated cyanobacteria/cyanotoxins services list is available online. It includes a form that laboratories and consultants may complete and submit to get added to the list, and is located at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/cyanobacteria-and-or-cyanotoxins-contract-services-list>.

All these listed documents and further information can be found on MassDEP's cyanobacteria web page, located online at: <https://www.mass.gov/guides/cyanobacterial-harmful-algal-blooms-cyanohabs-water>.

EPA Awards Approximately \$90 M to Address Water Infrastructure in Massachusetts

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced funding to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts totaling more than \$90 million for major water infrastructure projects in communities across the state. In addition to these sums, EPA is announcing significant grant funding to address lead in drinking water in schools in Boston, and schools and childcare facilities in communities across Massachusetts. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Clean Water Trust will receive \$3 million, and Boston Public Schools will receive \$6.2 million. These were among the first-ever selections under the

Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act's (WIIIN) Reduction in Lead Exposure via Drinking Water grants, which will be used to assist schools and childcare facilities in disadvantaged communities by installing thousands of water fountains and bottle filling stations in hundreds of schools and childcare facilities throughout Massachusetts.

[Full Press Release](#)

Letter from Boston Public Schools:

Good afternoon,

Thank you for a wonderful press event today, and congratulations to all the Massachusetts recipients! We are grateful and honored to receive this EPA grant, and are so appreciative of the guidance we have received over the years from MassDEP, particularly from Yvette DePeiza and her team.

Boston Public Schools will be using the \$6.215 million EPA grant to install and test 1400 new filtered bottle refill stations across the 87 BPS buildings that use bottled water as their sole source of drinking water. This will be matched by an investment of City of Boston/BPS funds from Mayor Walsh and Superintendent Cassellius of \$10.34 million over 3 years. BPS believes this new investment will provide a cleaner, healthier school environment and improve equitable drinking water access for the students, families, and staff in our schools and community. This initiative will also help the district continue to meet state and federal guidelines, promote health, reduce environmental impacts, and accommodate school preference for filtered bottle refill stations.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions. Thank you!

Best regards,

Katherine H. Walsh

Sustainability and Environmental Resources Manager

Boston Public Schools

<https://bostongreenschools.org/>

Important Correction to MassDEP's PFAS in Private Well Drinking Water Supplies FAQ

MassDEP's PFAS in *Private Well Drinking Water Supplies* FAQ has been revised to remove the option of discharging wastewater from point-of-use (POU) reverse osmosis (RO) treatment systems to Title 5 septic systems. Regardless of whether or not the concentration of the total combined PFAS6 chemicals in the RO wastewater would be expected to remain below the public drinking water Massachusetts Maximum Contaminant Level (MMCL) of 20 nanograms per liter (ng/L) or 20 parts per trillion (ppt), that wastewater may not be discharged to a Title 5 system. The only RO wastewater disposal options for wastewater with PFAS6 concentrations below the MMCL that don't involve hauling the wastewater

away for proper off-site treatment and disposal are to discharge it to a municipal sewer system, after checking with the sewer authority or private treatment plant operator to obtain any necessary approvals, or to an Underground Injection Control (UIC) drywell. See the revised FAQ at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas-in-private-well-drinking-water-supplies-faq>

Sodium Q & A

The 10-23-2020 Drinking Water Update email included an article on Sodium Reporting and Sodium Notification. A public water supplier reviewed the article and asked:

Question: If a PWS reports sodium results with their IOC's via eDEP how can they send a sodium notification to the MA Department of Public Health and local board of health?

Answer: a PWS who uses eDEP for reporting, may download a readable version of the results on eDEP and use that to report to DPH and the BOH (along with the notification form).

If you have any questions on sodium or sodium reporting please contact program.director-dwp@mass.gov Subject: Sodium.

AWWA and IAPMO Release New Resource on Water Stagnation in Buildings

October 2020 Wendi Wilkes, ASDWA

The American Water Works Association and International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials recently released a new resource, "Responding to Stagnation in Buildings with Reduced or No Water Use," in response to requests from water systems and building owners concerned about extended water stagnation in building plumbing due to COVID-19. Stagnation within building water systems is a concern during periods of low or no occupancy. When water does not move through the system, water quality issues may arise, causing potential health risks. The guide provides a framework for building managers to address building stagnation and a resource that water systems can use to support and assist the businesses in their service areas.

<https://www.awwa.org/Portals/0/AWWA/Government/20201001FrameworkforBuildingManagersFINALDistCopy.pdf>

Training

When you need training please look at the training calendar located at:


<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/drinking/drinking-water-training-class-schedules.html> for upcoming trainings.

Some newly added trainings on the calendar are:

- AWIA Webinar: Creating Resilient Water Utilities on Nov 17, 2020 – [More Info](#)
- RCAP Webinar: Understanding PFAS and O&M Best Practices - Nov 18-20, 2020 [More Info](#)
- EPA Webinar: Drinking Water Models and Tools – Nov 18, 2020 [More Info](#)
- EPA Webinar: Building Resilience to Extreme Weather Events – Nov 18, 2020 [More Info](#)
- EPA Webinar: Property Values and Water Quality-Hedonic Model – Nov 18, 2020 [More Info](#)
- EPA Webinar: Freshwater Explorer – Nov 19, 2020 [More Info](#)
- AWWA Webinar: Setting Effective Rates for Small Systems on Dec 10-11, 2020 - [More Info](#)
- Water Utility Resilience Virtual Forum - Dec 13-15, 2020 [More Info](#)

If you need a refresher on recently given trainings, you can review several training videos located at:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJn2AKOcYr7lutGJB-UfDKtQPF_o_249m

or click here:  **YouTube**

Spam

Remember, if you receive an email from the state the email address will be in the [firstname.lastname@mass.gov](#) format. If it is not, do not open or click on any links as it most probably is spam.

MassDEP is sending this important drinking water information to all PWS responsible persons who are listed on the state database. If you are no longer the correct responsible person for the PWS please reply with the correct contact information. MassDEP needs one responsible contact person from each PWS.

Operators, consultants, and others who are interested in Drinking Water Program updates are encouraged to request to be subscribed to this email list. You may also request to be unsubscribed by replying to this email.

This MassDEP Program Director technical assistance email is funded by the Safe Drinking Water Act Assessment (Section 70) Program. The Assessment is paid by all consumers of public water in Massachusetts and is collected by public water systems. For more information about the Assessment Program, go to <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/news/advisory-committees/safe-drinking-water-act-assessment-advisory-committee.html>.
