



MassDEP
Drinking Water Program
One Winter Street – 5th Floor; Boston, MA 02108
Program.Director-DWP@mass.gov or 617-292-5770

The Drinking Water Program 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>



@JPValery- Unsplash.com

Drinking Water Program Updates

2020-11-20

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
 - Teleworking Update
 - MassDEP Public Water Supply Information
 - MassDEP COVID-19 Conference Calls
 - EPA COVID-19 Information
2. PFAS Updates
 - Free PFAS Sampling
 - FREE PFAS Training
 - PFAS Treatment Planning and Design Grants - Round 2 Now Available!
3. The Revised Total Coliform Rule and the Ground Water Rule
4. New! TNC *In The Main* Newsletter
5. Nominations for Exemplary Source Water Protection Award
6. November is Infrastructure Security Month
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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.

Teleworking Update

Kathleen Theoharides, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs sent an update on teleworking for MassDEP and other state agencies: “I am writing to update you that all staff currently teleworking for part or all of their work schedule will continue to do so until at least the beginning of March 2021.”

Please continue to contact MassDEP staff by email and should you have any questions or need information you are always invited to use the Program.Director-DWP@mass.gov email account.

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>

PFAS Updates

To help public water suppliers understand the new PFAS regulations, the MassDEP Drinking Water Program has these documents available:

- Quick Start Guide <https://www.mass.gov/doc/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas-drinking-water-regulations-quick-reference-guide/download>
- Flowcharts for community and non-transient non-community PWS showing the PFAS sampling requirements. PWSs will also be receiving revised water quality monitoring schedules in advance of their required monitoring dates.
 - For small PWSs serving less than 3,300: www.mass.gov/doc/pfas-monitoring-flowchart-for-small-public-water-suppliers-com-and-ntnc/download
 - For all other PWSs: www.mass.gov/doc/pfas-monitoring-flowchart-for-public-water-suppliers-com-and-ntnc/download

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.”

FREE PFAS Training

MassDEP is presenting a free three-hour training session hosted by RCAP

PFAS in Drinking Water and the New Massachusetts Regulations

Thursday, December 10, 2020 - 9:00 am to 12 noon EST

3.0 Training Contact Hours

Please register at: <https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/8969622756394890754>

- You must register with an email address where you can be contacted after the training is complete. Please do not use an email address you do not check daily.
- Initial registration limited to 2 per system with a wait list for others due to training capacity.
- A recording of the training will be available on the [MassDEP YouTube Channel](#) by Dec 17.

After registering you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the training.

Attendance Statement

Please note the purposes of meeting requirements of the Massachusetts Board of Certification of Operators of Drinking Water Supply Facilities for issuing Training Contact Hours (TCHs):

1. The training session will be recorded.

2. GoToTraining tools will be used to monitor attendance throughout the 3 hours. These tools may include, but are not limited to, requests to "Raise Your Hand", answer a quiz or poll that pops up on the computer screen, take a quick survey, etc.
3. You will be required to complete and return an evaluation of the training online within a set period of time.
4. Each registrant must be on their own device in order to receive TCHs.

MassDEP reserves the right to withhold Training Contact Hours if attendance cannot be verified.

PFAS Treatment Planning and Design Grants - Round 2 Now Available!

MassDEP has recently completed Round 1 of PFAS Treatment Grants (Round 1 or the First Round), which provided PFAS-Impacted Communities with grants or reimbursements for the planning and design of PFAS Treatment Systems. MassDEP is pleased to offer a second round of grants with similar eligibility and goals as Round 1, which will be referred to as "Round 2" or "Round 2 PFAS Treatment Grant." Round 2 is intended to continue addressing the same goals and eligibility from the First Round, with an additional emphasis on new needs that have been identified as MassDEP's Statewide PFAS Sampling Program and Round 1 of the PFAS Treatment Grants both move forward.

As was the case with Round 1, MassDEP anticipates that the typical grant/reimbursement award to any individual applicant under this Round 2 program will be up to a maximum of \$200,000 per applicant. However, in its discretion, MassDEP reserves the right to award individual Round 2 grants or reimbursements in excess of \$200,000 for proposals of exceptional merit, based upon the total number, quality, and quantity of the proposals received for the Round 2 funding opportunity. The total potential funding available for all grant proposals/reimbursement requests through this program is up to \$3 million.

More information and the grant application are available [here](#).

Deadline to submit your grant application: **Wednesday, December 30, 2020.**

The Revised Total Coliform Rule and the Ground Water Rule

As a follow-up to the article that was in the last DWP Update pertaining to *RTCR, Routine Coliform Monitoring, and Population greater than 4900*, we want to remind all PWS's with groundwater sources that are not treated by approved/certified 4-log virus removal (or Surface Water Treatment Rule/Ground Water Under Direct Influence treatment), that **if** any routine distribution sample (finished water plant tap after treatment or routine distribution system sample) is total coliform positive **and** raw water samples (or entry point samples for systems with no treatment) were **not**

collected the same day, then the PWS must collect Ground Water Rule triggered monitoring regardless of population size or bacteriological monitoring frequency.

Therefore, PWS may want to consider collecting raw water source samples (or entry point samples for systems with no treatment) whenever routine distribution bacteriological monitoring is conducted to aid in compliance with the GWR.

Please refer to the [GWR Monitoring Flowchart](#) and [EPA GWR Quick Reference Guide](#). Also see [310 CMR 22.26 Ground Water Rule](#) for the full GWR regulatory requirements.

Please contact your MassDEP Regional Office if you have any questions regarding RTR or GWR requirements.

New! TNC In The Main Newsletter

In The Main has, since 1987, been a quarterly print newsletter for public water systems in Massachusetts. Hardcopies were printed and mailed out to the PWSs. But to embrace the distinct needs of smaller systems, special issues of *In The Main* issue were made specifically for TNC systems and mailed out every two years.

As electronic means became more prevalent, *In The Main* ceased to be printed and the biweekly Drinking Water Update e-newsletter was born. This allows a much timelier delivery of information to all PWSs. Again, to better meet the needs of small systems, *In The Main* was recently resurrected as a hybrid of sorts. It is tailored just for TNC systems, but in keeping with ecology and the electronic times it is not printed but emailed to all TNC systems. You can read a copy on the web at: <https://www.mass.gov/lists/communication-to-public-water-suppliers>. Alternatively, you can click [here](#) to get directly to the PDF of the newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading about the TNC topics in this special issue.

Nominations for Exemplary Source Water Protection Award

Know a water utility with robust Source Water Protection Programs? Maybe your utility has made great strides or has formed new partnerships to protect your sources waters. Please consider nominating them or your water system for member American Water Works Association (AWWA) Exemplary Source Water Protection Award. Small and large systems, surface or ground sources are eligible. [More Information](#).

Applications are due by January 15, 2021.

November is Infrastructure Security Month

Infrastructure Security Month is held in November to promote the vital role of critical infrastructure and why it is important to strengthen the security and resilience of America's critical infrastructure.

Join the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in celebrating Infrastructure Security Month with resources and tools to help your utility secure infrastructure and increase resilience to natural disasters and malevolent acts that threaten the water sector.

- When power goes out is your facility prepared? [Power Resilience Guide](#)
- Enhance your existing water quality surveillance and response system (SRS) [Design and Implement Customer Complaint Surveillance for Surveillance and Response Systems](#)
- [Hazard Mitigation – Why Now?](#) 12-10-2020 1-2:30

Ransomware Quick References

Two weeks ago it was reported that a large water supplier had a serious ransomware attack on its infrastructure. Please find below some sources to help you with avoiding and dealing with ransomware attacks.

- Ransomware: What It Is and What to Do About It (CISA): General ransomware guidance for organizational leadership and more in-depth information for CISOs and technical staff: https://us-cert.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Ransomware_Executive_One-Pager_and_Technical_Document-FINAL.pdf.
- Ransomware (CISA): Introduction to ransomware, notable links to CISA products on protecting networks, specific ransomware threats, and other resources: <https://www.us-cert.cisa.gov/Ransomware>
- HHS/HC3: Ransomware that impacts HPH is tracked by the HC3 and can be found at www.hhs.gov/hc3
- Security Primer – Ransomware (MS-ISAC): Outlines opportunistic and strategic ransomware campaigns, common infection vectors, and best practice recommendations: <https://www.cisecurity.org/white-papers/security-primer-ransomware/>
- Ransomware: Facts, Threats, and Countermeasures (MS- ISAC): Facts about ransomware, infection vectors, ransomware capabilities, and how to mitigate the risk of ransomware infection: <https://www.cisecurity.org/blog/ransomware-facts-threats-and-countermeasures/>.
- HHS Ransomware Fact Sheet: <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/RansomwareFactSheet.pdf>
- NIST Securing Data Integrity White Paper: <https://csrc.nist.gov/publications/detail/white-paper/2020/10/01/securing-data-integrity-against-ransomware-attacks/draft>

- Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center Ransomware Guide-Sept 2020
https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/CISA_MS-ISAC_Ransomware%20Guide_S5o8C.pdf
- Water ISAC Advisory on Eggegor Ransomware Incident- [Click here](#).

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.

Upcoming Trainings:

- AWWA Webinar: Setting Effective Rates for Small Systems on Dec 10-11, 2020 - [More Info](#)
- Water & Wastes Digest Webinar: Manganese-A Not so Innocent Contaminant on December 9, 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>.
