



MassDEP

Drinking Water Program
One Winter Street – 5th Floor; Boston, MA 02108

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

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



Drinking Water Program Updates

2020-07-31

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

1. MassDEP COVID-19 Information
 - MassDEP Public Water Supply Information
 - MassDEP COVID-19 Conference Calls
2. EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) 7/22/2020 letter
3. Final Rule on Lead-Free Fixtures
4. LCR Q/A: Are PWSs that report all their LCR/LCCA data via eDEP required to submit the form LCR-C?
5. Lead and Copper Video Available
6. DWP Sanitary Surveys 2020
7. Cyanobacterial Algal Blooms
8. Annual Statistical Reports
9. Resiliency Resources Available
 - AWIA Lessons Learned
 - Free Cybersecurity Assessments
10. National Surveys Measure American Perception and Concern over Drinking Water
11. PSA: Report a Receipt of any Unsolicited Seed Packages
12. Webinar and Resources - New PFAS Drinking Water Treatment Database Resources
13. Webinar - Getting Started with GIS for Free
14. Training Calendar
15. Spam

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 1 (as of July 6) - 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>

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](#)
- [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>
- Mass DEP 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>

- Existing Flexibilities under the SDWA <https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/existing-flexibilities-under-safe-drinking-water-act>
- Information on Training for Public Water Suppliers <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drinking-water-training>

EPA COVID-19 Information

- EPA COVID 19 <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus>
- Existing Flexibilities under the SDWA <https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/existing-flexibilities-under-safe-drinking-water-act>
- July 22, 2020 letter confirming EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) willingness to adjust inspection commitments due to COVID-19. See article below and click [this link](#) for a copy of letter.

MassDEP COVID-19 Conference Calls

MassDEP's Commissioner Suuberg is now holding bimonthly (every two weeks) 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.

The next call with Commissioner Suuberg is scheduled for Tuesday, August 11, at 2 PM. Please email all drinking water questions to MassDEP at program.director-dwp@mass.gov.

New 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/j/550814507>

EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) Letter

On July 22, 2020, EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Assistant Administrator Susan Bodine sent a letter to states, tribes, territories, and local agencies to confirm EPA's willingness to adjust inspection commitments due to COVID-19.

In the letter to states EPA recommends states "perform inspections, when it is safe to do so, consistent with their priorities and applicable OECA program priorities." And when planned on-site inspections cannot be performed due to COVID-19, EPA encourages "the use of off-site compliance monitoring activities." **The letter also indicates EPA will count off-site compliance monitoring activities towards a state's inspection/grant commitments and that states should document these activities similar to onsite inspections.** Included with the letter are OECA's recommended processes for adjusting commitment due to COVID-19. These processes will remain in effect through March 2021. Finally, Ms. Bodine reiterates EPA's commitment to being flexible and the desire to work together consistent with OECA's [July 2019 Partnership Policy](#) "to get the best possible outcome to ensure compliance with the law while ensuring the safety of our respective workforces, regulated entities and the public."

Click [this link](#) for a copy of the EPA letter.

Please note MassDEP's Drinking Water Program is already working with EPA Region 1 on an approach to performing sanitary surveys that is consistent with OECA guidance.

Final Rule: Use of Lead-Free Pipes, Fittings, Fixtures, Solder, and Flux for Drinking Water

On July 29, 2020, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a final rule to reduce lead in plumbing materials used in public water systems, homes, schools and other facilities. This action marks a significant milestone in implementing the Federal Action Plan to Reduce Childhood Lead Exposure (<https://www.epa.gov/lead/federal-action-plan-reduce-childhood-lead-exposure>). Along with other actions taken by EPA and its federal, state, and local partners, this final rule will help protect public health, especially children's health, from the risks associated with lead exposure. The final rule significantly limits the lead content allowed in plumbing materials (e.g., pipes, fittings, and fixtures) used in new construction and replacement of existing plumbing. Specifically, the new rule reduces the percentage of lead content allowed in these materials from eight percent to 0.25 percent in accordance with the Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act. The final rule also requires that manufacturers or importers certify that their products meet the requirements using a consistent verification process. As a result, this new rule will reduce lead in drinking water and assure that states, manufacturers, inspectors, and consumers have a common understanding of "Lead Free" plumbing.

You can find more information about this rule at: <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/use-lead-free-pipes-fittings-fixtures-solder-and-flux-drinking-water>

For question and answers about the "Lead Free" rule, see: <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/questions-and-answers-about-final-lead-free-rule>

LCR Q/A: Are PWSs that report all their LCR/LCCA data via eDEP required to submit the form LCR-C?

PWSs that report all of their results (LCR and LCCA) via eDEP are not required to submit form LCR-C (Lead and Copper Analysis Report located at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/lead-and-copper-analysis-report-lcr-c/>). However, they must continue to submit all other LCR forms. For questions on LCR or LCCA please contact progam.director-dwp@mass.gov. Subject LCR or LCCA.

DWP Lead and Copper Training Video Available

On July 15th, the Drinking Water Program (DWP) conducted a live online training titled *MassDEP Lead and Copper Rule Sampling Training: From Planning through Documentation*. Over 200 public water suppliers and contract operators attended the training. Training contact hours (TCH) were offered.

This training has been posted as three files on MassDEP's YouTube page. Please watch the training again if you attended the live training and want a refresher or if you were not able to attend and would like to view the training without TCHs.

Opening Remarks: <https://youtu.be/dHDYgLRKcj8>

Sampling Materials and Survey Worksheet: <https://youtu.be/yGsiy48ow6s>

Sampling Requirements and Forms: <https://youtu.be/hVbjtECdf8A>

The PowerPoint presentations are posted on MassDEP's web site at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drinking-water-training>.

The DWP is currently working on a proposal to offer recorded, on-demand trainings with TCHs.

For questions about the LCR training or subject matter, contact the DWP at program.director-dwp@mass.gov , Subject: LCR

DWP Sanitary Survey 2020

In 2020, in accordance with EPA's guidance, DWP's plan is to continue its EPA's sanitary survey goal using all available tools, including remote tools, as follows:

- Community Water System - Every three years.
- COMs with outstanding performance (e.g., Recipients of Compliance Awards), Non-Community Water Systems (NTNC and TNC) - Every five years.

MassDEP is committed to ensuring the safety of both the public and our employees. Considering the public health concerns surrounding COVID-19, sanitary surveys will be performed using a combination of remote and on-site inspection tools. The degree to which each sanitary survey is conducted remotely will depend on the type of PWS, the system's compliance history, emerging or imminent public health concerns, and whether it is safe to conduct on-site inspections. **It may be possible to conduct all eight sanitary survey elements described below remotely, depending on the specific issues associated with a PWS.**

1	Monitoring reporting and data verification	Review paperwork and plans to demonstrate compliance with Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations, Guidelines and policies (e.g., monitoring plan, sample results, maps)
2	System management and operation	Review paperwork and plans to demonstrate that maintenance and operations can maintain compliance (e.g., cross connection control, emergency plan, operations and maintenance plan)
3	Operator compliance	Review operator status to ensure the operator's certification is current and the appropriate level to meet Regulations
4	Water source(s)	Evaluate water supply sources to ensure proper source protection
5	Treatment facilities	Evaluate treatment processes (e.g., chemical addition, filtration), facilities, components, and techniques

6	Distribution system	Evaluate the adequacy, reliability, and safety of the system for distributing water
7	Finished water storage	Evaluate the adequacy, reliability, and safety of finished water storage
8	Pumps and pump facilities	Identify proper operation and maintenance of water system pumps and pumping facilities

In 2020 DWP will follow routine sanitary survey procedures when initiating contact with systems scheduled for sanitary surveys. This contact is normally accomplished with the standard notification/invitation letter or email. The notification letter/email has been updated to include appropriate COVID-19 related changes and will be the first step in the evaluation of the system. Following the notification letter/email, DWP will solicit necessary information from the PWS to determine if an on-site visit is necessary. If an on-site visit is determined to be necessary DWP will provide a COVID-19 safety questionnaire to the PWS. Both DEP and PWS staff are required to review, answer and sign-off on the required COVID-19 safety questionnaire before initiating the survey.

Your regional office will contact you and explain all steps prior to conducting a sanitary survey, whether in person or remotely. If you have any questions please contact program.director-dwp@mass.gov or your regional sanitary survey contact. Include the subject line “Sanitary Survey” in your email for a prompt response.

Cyanobacterial Algal Blooms

August is a good time for cyanobacterial harmful algal blooms (CyanoHAB) to grow and proliferate in surface water bodies. Please be on the lookout for any such growths. These blooms can have serious health effects to humans, pets, and animals who have contact with the water (dogs have a high mortality rate when they play in or drink the water).



Should you notice any suspected CyanoHABs please avoid contact with it. Contact your local board of health with the name and location of the water body. Your BOH will then contact MDPH or MassDEP if necessary.

If you are a PWS surface water supplier and have observed a potential CyanoHAB in your source, you should contact the Drinking Water Program in your MassDEP regional office immediately.

For more information go to: <https://www.mass.gov/guides/cyanobacterial-harmful-algal-blooms-cyanohabs-water>.

Annual Statistical Report

The Annual Statistical Report was due on July 1st, 2020. We would like to thank the 96% of public water suppliers who have submitted the report. We understand these are difficult times and thank you for taking the time and putting in the effort to get the report submitted.

If you are one of the 57 PWS that have not yet submitted the Annual Statistical Report you can still do so via [eDEP](#).

If you need assistance contact the Drinking Water Program at program.director-dwp@mass.gov (Subject: ASR/Tio Yano).

Resiliency Resources Available

AWIA Lessons Learned

The July/August 2020 edition of the ASCE's *Civil Engineering* magazine includes an article titled, "Risk, Resilience, Response," which summarizes lessons learned by PWSs serving over 100,000 people in preparing the Risk and Resilience Assessments (RAA) required by the America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA). The article provides an excellent summary for systems who must meet the December 31, 2020, or June 30, 2021, RAA deadlines and also discusses cybersecurity and ransomware.

The article is available online at: <https://www.asce.org/cemagazine/risk-resilience-response/>.

Free Cybersecurity Assessments

In concert with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Horsley Witten Group, Inc. (HW) is providing free onsite cybersecurity assessments and technical assistance to interested drinking water and wastewater utilities. The focus is on smaller and rural utilities to help develop a cyber action plan to mitigate vulnerabilities and results of the assessment are strictly confidential (not individually reported to EPA or any state regulatory agency).

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this technical assistance is being offered virtually. If your utility is interested in conducting an assessment and learning more about reducing cybersecurity vulnerabilities, please register here: <https://horsleywitten.com/cybersecurityutilities/>.

If you have questions, please see the attached flyer for more details, or feel free to contact Gemma Kite at HW at gkite@horsleywitten.com or 508-833-6600.

Two Recently Released National Surveys Measure American Perception and Concern Over Drinking Water

From the [ASDWA Newsroom](#) 2020-07-20

Last week, the American Water Works Association (AWWA) released the [results of a recent survey](#) analyzing the public's perception of drinking water. The survey used a sample of 2,200 U.S. adults, 1,940 of which responded that they are served by a water utility. Notable results include:

- 77% of those served by a water utility rate their water as excellent or good.
- 78% of adults with a water utility also report they are satisfied with the water they receive at their faucet.
- In an open-ended analysis of how adults rate the quality, safety, and satisfaction of their water, current perceptions of water seem judged by the taste, look, and smell.
- The decision to drink bottled water is driven by convenience, but demographic variables such as community-type and income-level also play a role.
- By better informing water utility customers about infrastructure updates, the environmental benefits of drinking tap water, and the filtration processes, utilities can improve the reputation of tap water.
- Adults with water utilities are split on their awareness of frequent water testing.

The Water Main, in collaboration with APM Research Lab also [recently released their Water + Us: How We Think, Feel, and Take Action on Water](#). The report covers the results of a national survey (1,005 adult Americans) designed to measure Americans' knowledge, connection, concern, and action related to water issues facing the country. Notable findings include:

- 82% of respondents are concerned about the future of America's drinking water infrastructure, including the 45% who are "very concerned."
- 84% of respondents are concerned about the future of America's water resources, including the 42% who are "very concerned."
- 49% of respondents say there is too little governmental regulation protecting water; 9% say there is too much regulation.
- 47% of respondents indicate that, when deciding who to vote for, it is "very important" that a candidate says that taking care of water is a priority for them.

Public Service Announcement

Report a Receipt of any Unsolicited Seed Packages

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) has been notified that several Massachusetts residents have received unsolicited packages that appear to have originated in a foreign country and contain seeds. While the exact types of seeds in the packages are unknown, the seeds are thought to be invasive plant species, and not believed to be harmful to humans or pets but could pose a significant risk to agriculture or the environment.



MDAR encourages Massachusetts residents that receive or have received an unsolicited package of seeds to not plant the seeds (do not throw seeds into the trash) and immediately complete a [form](#) on MDAR's website to provide important information to state plant regulatory officials.

Read the rest of the press release [here](#).

New PFAS Drinking Water Treatment Database Resources and Webinar

EPA has updated its Drinking Water Treatability Database with new treatment options and scientific references for PFAS and will hold a webinar about the database on August 6th. The additional information includes four new PFAS compounds: difluoro (perfluoromethoxy) acetic acid, also known as perfluoro-2-methoxyacetic acid, perfluoro-3,5-dioxahexanoic acid, perfluoro-3,5,7-trioxaoctanoic acid, and perfluoropropane sulfonate; and 20 new scientific references.



The EPA webinar on **August 6, from 3:00-4:00 pm** (eastern time) will provide an overview of PFAS treatment issues and the EPA models that are available free to the public, along with examples of how they can be used. The information generated from the models will provide states and utilities with a better understanding of the fundamentals of carbon adsorption and what that means to the operation, performance, and costs associated with this technology. The first part of the webinar will cover the background treatment issues. The second portion of the webinar will be a step-by-step tutorial on where to find the models, how to download the models, and how to run them. For more information, visit [EPA's drinking water treatability database](#). [Register for the webinar here](#).

Getting Started with GIS for Free

Hosted by the Environmental Finance Center Network at Sacramento State

<https://mailchi.mp/syr/reminder-to-register-for-may-workshop-for-small-water-systems-725778?e=6dd78a69de>

Wednesday August 5, 2020 2:00 – 3:00 pm EST [Register Online](#)

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are essential for water utility management applications, but they can be expensive. QGIS is a free open-source software that utilities can use for mapping and analysis with GIS. This webinar will introduce QGIS software, including how data is organized, how to import information from spreadsheets and other common sources, and several relevant tools in QGIS for utility management.

Training Calendar

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

mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/drinking/drinking-water-training-class-schedules.html for upcoming trainings.

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

youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJn2AKOcYr7lutGJB-UfDKtQPF_o_249m

Or click here:  YouTube

Spam

Please be reminded that official emails from MassDEP will never come from a Hotmail or any other personal account. If you receive an email of this nature, the email is spam. Do not click on the links, and delete it immediately. To safeguard yourself only click open emails that have [XXXXX.XXXX@mass.gov](#).

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 mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/news/advisory-committees/safe-drinking-water-act-assessment-advisory-committee.html.



Free Onsite Cybersecurity Assessment and Technical Assistance

Cybersecurity is a broad term that refers to the security of computer network infrastructure and data. A cyber attack is an attempt to undermine or compromise the function of a computer network or system, or an attempt to track the online movements of individuals without their permission.

What is the onsite assessment and technical assistance?

With the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Horsley Witten Group (HWG) is offering free, confidential, onsite cybersecurity assessments and technical assistance to interested water and wastewater utilities. The assessment consists of a questionnaire completed on-site with HWG staff, and the technical assistance consists of developing a cyber action plan based on the results of your utility's assessment focused on best practices to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a cyber incident. Adoption of these practices can reduce the likelihood that a cyber attack will be successful and allow the utility to recover from any cyber attacks faster and at a lower cost.

What are the expected outcomes?

All individual utility information gathered during the assessment will be protected and remain confidential. Trends in the anonymized, aggregated data will be shared with other utilities and agencies so that lessons learned from the assessments may benefit all.

Participating utilities can expect to receive a straightforward overview of their vulnerabilities and suggested best practices to reduce risks to their business enterprise, SCADA, and communications systems. Additionally, the utility will develop their cyber action plan with HWG and work to implement any recommended best practices.

What does the utility need to prepare before the onsite assessment and technical assistance?

The assessment will require input from management, IT, operations/control staff and engineers as appropriate. The utility will also need to compile and provide any existing system documentation/diagrams, policies, and procedures.

Is there any follow-up?

Yes, HWG will contact the utility on two separate occasions after the development of the cyber action plan to gauge progress and see if additional assistance is required.

To register your utility, please visit:

[https://horsleywitten.com/
cybersecurityutilities](https://horsleywitten.com/cybersecurityutilities)

For more information, contact:

Gemma Kite at 508-833-6600



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