



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Department of Environmental Protection

100 Cambridge Street Suite 900 Boston, MA 02114 • 617-292-5500

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Corrections were made to several broken hyperlinks in the email below as well as the attached document.

Wednesday, June 11, 2025

VERY IMPORTANT NOTICE

IMPORTANT UPDATE: TIER 1 PUBLIC NOTICE (PN) INSTRUCTIONS AND TEMPLATE FOR THE REVISED TOTAL COLIFORM RULE

Attention Public Water Suppliers,

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Drinking Water Program (DWP) has made critical updates to the **Tier 1 PN (Boil Water Order) instructions** as well as associated templates for the **Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR)**.

MassDEP/DWP Public Notification (PN) regulations (310 CMR 22.16) include specific requirements for notifying the public of all emergencies involving violations of drinking water regulations. If a “Do Not Drink,” “Boil Water,” or “Do Not Use” order is issued, the public notice process should be initiated immediately upon determination by MassDEP/DWP and comply with the public notification and reporting requirements of 310 CMR 22.00. Tier 1 PNs, which are required for violations and situations with significant potential to have serious adverse effects on human health as a result of short-term exposure, require PWS to provide public notice to their impacted consumers within 24 hours of learning of the emergency. During this 24-hour period, PWS must also contact and consult with their MassDEP/DWP Regional Office to determine any additional PN requirements.

Specific updates have been made to the following sections of the RTCR Tier 1 PN template:

- **Population Served, pg. 2**
 - PWS must distribute PNs to all consumers impacted by the specific situation. This may include consumers outside the PWS’s town boundaries if the PWS serves residents in neighboring communities.

This information is available in alternate format. Please contact MassDEP at 617-292-5500.
TTY# MassRelay Service 1-800-439-2370
MassDEP Website: www.mass.gov/dep

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- PWS must include in their PNs and other communication specific information about the service area impacted by the emergency, especially if part of the service area is located in neighboring communities.
- PWS must list the specific community or communities including any streets in neighboring communities served by your PWS.
- **PN Translation Requirements, pg. 3**
 - If your PWS serves a community with 10% or more, or greater than 1,000 people of non-English speaker consumers, your PN must contain a statement in the appropriate language(s) regarding the importance of the report.
 - If your PWS serves a community where 25% or more of your consumers speak one particular language, you must translate the entire PN report into that specific language and have the translated version immediately available upon request.
- **Available PN attachments, pg. 5:**
 - Language Translation template
 - Informational Fact Sheet: Drinking Water Contaminated with Bacteria
 - Guidance for Restaurant Establishments During a Boil Order
 - Handwashing Tips for Restaurant Establishments During a Boil Order
 - List of Affected Areas template

MassDEP DWP strongly recommends that PWS have all PN outreach materials prepared and pre-approved as part of their Emergency Response Plans (ERP) so that in an emergency, these resources can be quickly customized and disseminated to all relevant parties.

PWS Action Requested

1. Please review the attached updated Instructions, PN Template and attachments.
2. PWS must update their Tier 1 RTCR Templates (Boil Water Order PN template) and be ready to use the updated template when there is a violation requiring a Tier I- Boil Water Order Notice.
 - If PWS opt to use their own templates or language for public notification, they must obtain pre-approval from their MassDEP/DWP Regional Office prior to the dissemination of these documents

The updated Tier 1 (Boil Water) information is located on our website at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/pn-tier-1-template-coliform-rule/download>.

Other PN Resources:

- Public Notification Forms and Templates can be downloaded from the MassDEP website at <https://www.mass.gov/lists/public-notification-forms-and-templates>.
- The Public Notification Fact Sheet can be accessed at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/fact-sheet-drinking-water-public-notification>.

The Public Notification FAQ page can be accessed at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/faqs-drinking-water-public-notification>.

Please contact the MassDEP/DWP at program.director-dwp@mass.gov with any questions regarding these important updates to RTCR related documents and resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yvette DePeiza".

Yvette DePeiza, Program Director
Drinking Water Program
MassDEP

Attachment: Tier 1 PN instruction, Template and attachments

Please note our new address: 100 Cambridge Street – Suite 900, Boston, MA 02114

The main Drinking Water Program number is 617-292-5770

To contact the Drinking Water Program email Program.Director-DWP@mass.gov

For Information on public drinking water visit <https://www.mass.gov/topics/drinking-water>