Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)/Drinking Water Program (DWP)

In the Main Newsletter – 01/09/2026

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In The Main - The Drinking Water Updates can be found online at the MassDEP Communication to Public Water Suppliers Website or at the Statehouse Archives which has a searchable database.

Martin Luther King, Jr. in Boston April 23, 1965, Photo: Hans Bosshard

This In the Main Newsletter has these topics of interest:

Are you looking for past issues or topics in our *In the Main* newsletter?

Use the search function in the Statehouse Archives Website.

1. Deadlines, New Templates, Forms, Guidance, and More

DWSRF Service Line Funding Available Now!

Did you Know DWSRF Funding is available right now on a rolling application first-come first-serve basis for identifying unknowns and replacing lead service lines? Applications can be submitted through the SRF Portal. Please contact Kaitlyn Connors, Director of Water Investment, Kaitlyn.Connors2@mass.gov, for more information.

2026 PWS Certificates of Registration

The 2026 Public Water System Certificates of Registration are now available to download on the Public Water Supplier Document Search webpage.

2026-2028 Compliance Monitoring Schedules

Most of the 2026-2028 Compliance Monitoring Schedules are now available to view and download on the Public Water Supplier Document Search webpage. If you do not see your PWS' schedule, please contact your MassDEP Regional Office.

Recent Changes to the Public Water Supplier Document Search Webpage

We have recently made changes to the Public Water Supplier Document Search webpage. The following downloads are now available:

- Historical Certificates of Registration going back to 2015
- Community Consumer Confidence Reports going back to 2012
- Non-Community (TNC and NTNC) Water Quality Reports going back to 2015

We are in the process of including historical Annual Statistical Reports going back to the 2009 reporting year. We will announce these in *In the Main* as they become available.

2. Mass. Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Program – 2026 Funding Round

Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Program
Deadline: Monday, April 13, 2026

More Information: Apply to the Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Program

The Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Program provides financial assistance to municipalities, municipal water suppliers and to water and fire districts for the purchase of land in MassDEP approved drinking water supply protection areas, or land in estimated protection areas of identified and planned future water supply wells or reservoirs. Grants of up to 60% of project costs for a maximum of $350,000 are available this grant round. **An information session will be held Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 2:30 pm via MS Teams**. Email vanessa.farny@mass.gov to receive the link.

Applications **must** be submitted online via the EEA Grants Management System. Please note: Applicants will need to create an account online in advance of applying.

3. Update: PWS' Seeking Permit Application Information for Discharge Scenarios with PFAS6 or Other Contaminants Above the Massachusetts MCL

In the November 14th, 2025, issue of ***In the Main***, MassDEP published a Fact Sheet Article titled: ***MassDEP DWP Fact Sheet: PWS Discharge Scenarios with PFAS6 above the Massachusetts MCL; PWS' Seeking Forbearance Requests for Sampling a Purged Well Water***. A link to this article is available here: See attachment at the end of the newsletter at In the Main Newsletter - 11/14/2025.

MassDEP/Drinking Water Program received and reviewed your questions and comments regarding this article, including requests for additional scenarios to be considered for forbearance eligibility for routine operations and maintenance activities that had minimal impact and required short-term discharge of water containing PFAS6 or other contaminants above a Massachusetts MCL. The Drinking Water Program (DWP) and Wastewater Program (WWP) worked together to review each additional scenario, and approved a total of **seven (7)** scenarios listed in Table 1 below. A PWS may be eligible to apply for consideration for determination of the applicable permit including forbearance from the Ground Water Discharge Permit Program, 314 CMR 5.00 requirements because DWP and WWP have determined that the short term operations and maintenance situations in Table 1 do not pose a risk of groundwater contamination and therefore will not require a groundwater discharge permit, provided that the requirements and conditions described below are met.

For the seven scenarios described in Table 1, MassDEP has determined that their managed discharge to the ground, following at a minimum, the best management practices described in Appendix A of MassDEP's ***Request for Ground Water Discharge Review and Determination of Permit Applicability application form (DWP-GWD-PA)*** does not pose a risk of groundwater contamination and therefore should not require a groundwater discharge permit, provided that the water is discharged to the ground

over the same aquifer with similar pollutant levels from which the water was drawn or over an aquifer containing the same, or greater, concentrations of pollutants.

The DWP *Request for Ground Water Discharge Review and Determination of Permit Applicability* application has been expanded to include all contaminants, not just PFAS6. The tables below summarize each of the scenarios that are, and are not, eligible for forbearance consideration. MassDEP anticipates revising the existing regulations (**CMR 314 5.00**) governing these types of discharges described below to create appropriate exemptions.

For consideration for the seven scenarios, PWS should submit any questions or comments or the above referenced application form and documentation to: program.director-dwp@mass.gov, **Subject**: Discharge Review

Link: ***Review and Determination of Permit Applicability Form (DWP-GWD-PA)***

Please Note: Nothing in the *Review and Determination of Permit Applicability* request form is intended to prevent the implementation of additional best management practices deemed warranted by on-site professionals to provide further environmental protection.

Summary Tables

Table 1: Scenarios and Activities Eligible for Consideration for Forbearance Review

#	Discharge Scenario	Discharge Volume Eligibility
1	**Purging well volumes for the purpose of collecting groundwater samples for water quality testing.**	Up to five (5) well volumes of groundwater discharged to ground surface for each of the noted PWS Sources.
2	**Testing of flow meter(s)**	No greater than 2 hours of cumulative flow through each meter tested.
3	**Drilling a new well or redrilling an existing well.**	Drilling fluids discharged to ground surface that are related to the drilling or redrilling of a well, prior to the well reaching its final depth.
4	**Development of (a) new or existing well(s).**	Cumulative period of discharge not to exceed two hours per well
5	**Conduct short-term pumping test(s) on new or existing well(s).**	Cumulative period of discharge not to exceed three hours.
6	**Disinfecting a new or existing well.**	Cumulative period of discharge not to exceed three hours.

7	**Other: Performing necessary safe drinking water operations and/or maintenance activities that will discharge less than 50,000 gallons**	The total discharge volume for this activity may not exceed a cumulative volume of 50,000 gallons.

Table 2: Scenarios and Activities that are NOT Eligible for consideration for Forbearance

#	**PWS Task or Activity**	**Regulation and Program**	**Program or Department to Contact**
1	Discharge to ground or subsurface for scenarios not described in the previous table	**314 CMR** 5.03 – 5.05	WWP; DWP UIC Registration
2	Discharge to wetlands or surface water	**314 CMR** 3.03-3.05, 4.05(e)	WWP; EPA NPDES Program;
3	Discharge to ocean	**314 CMR** 3.03-3.05, 4.05(e)	EPA NPDES Program; WWP
4	Flushing water mains unless total cumulative flushing volume will not exceed 50,000 gallons and other forbearance eligibility requirements are met		DWP UIC Registration; WWP
5	Discharge to WTP lagoons for scenarios not described in the previous table		WWP; DWP UIC Registration
6	Pumping to waste (new source approval testing) unless cumulative period of discharge doesn't exceed three hours		WWP
7	Pumping to waste (PFAS plume interception)	**310 CMR** 40.0317	BWSC (if MCP); WWP (see rows 1-3)
8	Water purification/Treatment backwash		WWP; DWP UIC Registration; EPA NPDES Program
9	Disposal of water treatment residuals & spent media	**310 CMR** 19.061(1-3)	BAW Solid Waste Program; WWP

PWS should submit any questions or comments or the above information to: program.director-dwp@mass.gov, **Subject**: Wastewater Discharge Review

4. 2026 Goals for Transient Non-Community (TNC) Systems

As we begin 2026, Transient Non-Community (TNC) Public Water Systems continue playing a critical role in providing safe drinking water to employees, customers, and visitors across Massachusetts. The new year is a great time to refocus on a few core goals that help keep systems compliant, reliable, and inspection ready.

Top Goals for 2026

Stay on Track with Monitoring
Know your sampling requirements and deadlines, and plan ahead-especially for seasonal systems. Timely and accurate sampling remains one of the most important compliance responsibilities for TNC systems.

Strengthen Recordkeeping
Maintain organized records of lab results, maintenance activities, and correspondence. Good documentation supports compliance and makes inspections faster and easier.

Protect System Infrastructure
Regularly inspect wells, cyber protection, treatment equipment, and distribution components. Address small issues early to prevent water quality problems later.

Maintain Certified Operator Coverage
Ensure your system has appropriate certified operator oversight and that certifications remain current throughout the year.

Be Inspection-Ready
Review past sanitary survey findings, correct outstanding issues, and keep sampling taps accessible and clearly labeled.

Prepare for Emergencies
Update emergency contact information and review response procedures so you're ready to act quickly if an issue arises.

By focusing on these key goals in 2026, TNC systems can reduce violations, improve system resilience, and continue protecting public health. Thank you for your continued commitment to safe drinking water and best wishes for a successful year ahead. As always please contact us with any questions throughout the year at program.director-dwp@mass.gov.

5. FREE Online Self-Paced Classes at Bristol Community College – Spring 2026

MassDEP Drinking Water Program, in partnership with UMass Amherst, Bristol Community College, and Massachusetts Rural Water Association, is offering two FREE online self-paced pre-requisite training classes in Spring 2026 (starting in February).

Basic Drinking Water Distribution is approximately 30-40 hours long and is designed to prepare students to take the D2 through D4 Drinking Water Distribution exams. Basic Drinking Water Treatment is approximately 40-50 hours long and is designed to prepare students to take the T2 Drinking Water Treatment exam. Both classes are approved by the Board of Certification for Operators of Drinking Water Supply Facilities and have a capacity of 25-30 students.

Course Descriptions

Basic Drinking Water Distribution: Topics include (but are not limited to) defining a public water system, proper operation, regulatory requirements, components, equipment and operation, water quality monitoring, storage facilities, cathodic protection, corrosion control, hydraulics, chemistry, formulas, flow, pressure, performance and transmission, cross connection, pumps, motors and operator ethics, safety and more.

Basic Drinking Water Treatment: Topics include (but are not limited to) the principles of hydrology associated with groundwater and surface water supply management, the hydrologic cycle, precipitation type and measurement, aquifer types and groundwater flow measurements, surface water flow measurements, and surface water and well sampling. Students will also study source water supplies and protection, regulations, physical and chemical treatment processes, operator ethics and safety.

Teaching Procedure

These classes are self-paced and online. The class will be taught on an eLearning platform, and all instructional content will be available on this platform. Additionally, textbooks will be provided for all students. Each week, there will be approximately 3 hours of lecture content and additional hours for reading the textbook and reviewing other required instructional material. The Basic Drinking Water Treatment class also has additional laboratory exercises each week. Students can earn Training Contact Hours (TCHs) upon successful completion of the class and will be eligible to sit for Drinking Water exams.

How to Apply

If you are interested in taking this class, please send a letter or e-mail expressing your interest, and/or a resume to Robert Rak of Bristol Community College at Robert.Rak@bristolcc.edu, Subject: Interested in Bristol Community College Basic Drinking Water [Distribution/Treatment] Class. Or, you can contact the Drinking Water Program at program.director-dwp@mass.gov, Subject: Interested in Bristol Community College Basic Drinking Water [Distribution/Treatment] Class. Minimum qualifications include, but are not limited to, an interest in a drinking water career, a high school diploma or GED (or close to completing), and 17 years or older. Interest emails from potential students will be reviewed and accepted in the order which they are received until all class spots are filled. There are approximately 25-30 available spots in the class. Registration and sign-up instructions will be sent

after evaluating all inquiries. Please contact Robert Rak or the Drinking Water Program with any questions.

6. AWIA Round 2: RRA and ERP Certification Deadlines for 2026

The new year brings new deadlines related to AWIA Round 2 compliance:

- Community PWS serving a population between 3,301 and 50,000 are required to certify to EPA updates to their Risk and Resiliency Assessments (RRAs) by **June 30, 2026**.
- Community PWS serving a population between 50,000 and 99,999 are required to certify to EPA updates to their Emergency Response Plans (ERPs) by **June 30, 2026**.

Community Water System size (by population served as of March 31, 2024)	Certify Risk & Resilience Assessment (RRA) by:	Certify Emergency Response Plan (ERP) within 6 months of RRA, but no later than:
≥ 100,000	March 31, 2025	September 30, 2025
50,000 – 99,999	December 31, 2025	**June 30, 2026**
3,300 – 49,999	**June 30, 2026**	December 31, 2026

The American Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) was first passed in 2018 and requires community water systems to certify that they have prepared and updated their Risk and Resilience Assessments (RRAs) and Emergency Response Plans (ERPs). Community water systems are required to recertify to EPA that their RRAs and ERPs are up to date every five years. With changes from the past five years including supply chain issues, cybersecurity concerns, and increased funding opportunities, public water systems may have a lot to update in their RRAs and ERPs.

A comprehensive list of requirements, resources, FAQs, fact sheets, training recordings, and guidance for preparing and certifying updates to your RRAs and ERPs with the EPA can be found at the AWIA Section 2013/SDWA Section 1433: Risk and Resilience Assessments and Emergency Response Plans Webpage.

How do I certify my RRA and ERP to EPA?

Public Water Systems can certify updates to their RRA and ERP by filling out the RRA/ERP Certification Statement and uploading the signed document using one of three methods:

1. Electronic submission
2. Email
3. Regular mail

EPA strongly recommends submitting RRA/ERP Certification Statements via electronic submission. Guidance for submitting your RRA/ERP and downloading the Certification Statement documents can be found at the EPA: How to Certify Your Risk and Resilience Assessment or Emergency Response Plan Webpage. **Do not submit your updated RRA and ERP to EPA or to MassDEP, as those documents may contain sensitive information about your system.**

How do I submit ERP Compliance Checklists to MassDEP/DWP?

DWP requires PWS to submit an ERP Compliance Checklist whenever there are substantive changes to a PWS's ERP. PWS should submit an updated ERP Compliance Checklist once they have made updates to their ERP. PWS can submit their updated checklists to the Program Director at program.director-dwp@mass.gov, Subject: ERP Compliance Checklist for AWIA Round 2. **Reminder: PWS should NOT submit their full ERP documents to DWP, as those documents contain sensitive information about their system.**

MassDEP RRA Certification Reminder Letters for Community PWS

On January 5, 2026, MassDEP/DWP sent a letter to Community PWS serving a population between 50,000 and 99,999 to provide a 6-month reminder about the ERP certification deadline of June 30, 2026. On January 5, 2026, MassDEP/DWP also sent a letter to Community PWS serving a population between 3,301 and 50,000 to provide a 6-month reminder about the RRA certification deadline of June 30, 2026. You can find these letters at the webpage Communication to Public Water Suppliers – Emails and Direct Mail.

What if I'm not a Community Water System that serves over 3,300 people?

Community water systems serving less than 3,300 people, non-community water systems, and wastewater systems are not required to certify to EPA the completion and update of their RRA or ERP. **However, per Massachusetts regulation 310 CMR 22.04(13), all public water systems are required to have an Emergency Response Plan.** PWS are encouraged to regularly review their ERPs and make changes as often as necessary to keep up with changes in their system and organization.

EPA hosts a Very Small Drinking Water and Wastewater System Resilience CEU program to assist very small drinking water systems and wastewater systems to develop RRAs and ERPs. Participants can earn up to 10 TCHs towards their operator license renewals for participating in this program. More information can be found at the EPA webpage Resources to Promote RRAs and ERPs for CWS that Serve Less than 3,301, non-CWS, and Wastewater Systems.

Where can I find more information about this topic?

Use the following resources to learn more about RRAs, ERPs, AWIA, and more.

- MassDEP *Guidelines for Public Water Systems*, Chapter 12 – Emergency Response Planning Requirements
- MassDEP *Guidelines for Public Water Systems*, Appendix O – Handbook for Water Supply Emergencies
- Previous MassDEP *In the Main* newsletters, including
    - In the Main Newsletter-March 7, 2024;
    - In the Main Newsletter-September 6, 2024;
    - In the Main Newsletter-December 13, 2024;
    - In the Main Newsletter-January 10, 2025;
    - In the Main Newsletter-March 7, 2025;
    - In the Main Newsletter-March 21, 2025;
    - In the Main Newsletter-April 18, 2025;
    - In the Main Newsletter-July 11, 2025;
    - In the Main Newsletter-September 9, 2025;

    - In the Main Newsletter-September 19, 2025;
    - In the Main Newsletter-October 3, 2025;
    - In the Main Newsletter-November 26, 2025; and
    - In the Main Newsletter-December 24, 2025.
- EPA Drinking Water and Wastewater Resilience Webpage
- EPA Water Resilience - AWIA Section 2013 Webpage
- EPA How to Certify Your RRA or ERP Webpage

7. Updated Document: Emergency Response Planning Guide for Public Drinking Water Systems

MassDEP/DWP recently made updates to the *Emergency Response Planning Guide for Public Drinking Water Systems*. This document provides information about important emergency response planning elements and a template for developing an Emergency Response Plan. This document can be used in addition to the *Guidelines* Chapter 12 and Appendix O.

Updates were made to this document to incorporate emergency response topics such as public notification, interconnections, and distribution system mapping. These topics have been included in previous outreach to Public Water Systems via direct e-mail communications and the *In the Main* newsletter. The revisions also include fixing broken links and other grammatical and formatting changes.

Please reach out to the Drinking Water Program at program.director-dwp@mass.gov if you have any questions.

8. EC-SDC Grant Awardees Training Webinar

Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grant Program

On December 10th, 2025, MassDEP DWP hosted a Grant Awardees Training Webinar for all current EC-SDC grant awardees. This training provided an overview of the grant requirements, including the EC-SDC contracting process, permitting, invoice submission, and final project reporting. Technical Assistance available to all PWSs was also discussed. You can view the training portion of the webinar on the MassDEP YouTube channel, here: **MassDEP YouTube channel**, here: **Apply to the Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Program**

Visit the **MassDEP Drinking Water Program's** **Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grant** page for more information about the grant program. To learn more about the communities that have received these grants, visit MassDEP's EC-SDC Grants Map at the bottom of the above webpage.

9. LCR, LCRR, and LCRI Updates

PWS with Lead, GRR, and/or Unknown Service Lines Sent an LCRI Preparation Email on January 5, 2026?

All PWS which have a Service Line Inventory (SLI) with Lead, GRR, or Lead Status Unknown service lines were sent an email on Monday, January 5th, which included information on upcoming LCRI requirements

your PWS is encouraged to prepare for, and resources your PWS can take advantage of, such as DWSRF Funding.

Did you Know DWSRF Funding is available right now on a rolling application first-come first-serve basis for identifying unknowns and replacing lead service lines? Applications can be submitted through the SRF Portal. Please contact Kaitlyn Connors, Director of Water Investment, Kaitlyn.Connors2@mass.gov, for more information.

This email was sent to the PWS Owner, Primary Contact, and Primary Distribution Operator on file. contained the subject line: *Your PWS has been identified as having lead, GRR and/or unknown service lines. The information in this email is provided to help you prepare for and plan your implementation of the LCRI.*

The full email sent January 5, 2026 can be found here. Much of the information included in the email is also referenced in the new Preparing for the LCRI Factsheet. PWS are encouraged to review this factsheet for the helpful information it provides.

New Lead Service Line Replacement Plan (LSLRP) Form Available!

A new LSLRP is available for submission! This LSLRP form meets all Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) and can be submitted proactively to help your PWS prepare to identify unknowns and replace lead service lines ahead of the LCRI compliance date. The form is available for submission here: LCRI LSLRP Form.

To save your Microsoft Form response within the application, Microsoft requires you to be signed in with a Microsoft account. If you do not wish to save your information using the Microsoft process, an automated email will be sent to the PWS Owner's Email and LSLRP Preparer's Email entered into the LSLRP. PWS are encouraged to save this email for record keeping purposes, to track their LSLRP progress.

What are you doing to plan for and stay in compliance with the LCR?

Are You Tracking Your 90th Percentile Results? A Key Tool for Protecting Public Health

Public Water Systems subject to the Lead and Copper Rule are required to calculate and report the **90th percentile results for lead and copper.** While meeting reporting requirements is essential, regularly reviewing and tracking these results over time is just as important.

Maintaining records of your 90th percentile values - especially in graph form - can help systems **identify trends early, evaluate treatment performance, and take proactive action before an action level exceedance occurs**.

Why Tracking the 90th Percentile Is Important

- The 90th percentile reflects **conditions at higher-risk homes** and is a key indicator of corrosion control effectiveness.
- Reviewing results over multiple compliance periods helps identify **upward trends** that may not be obvious from a single sampling round.

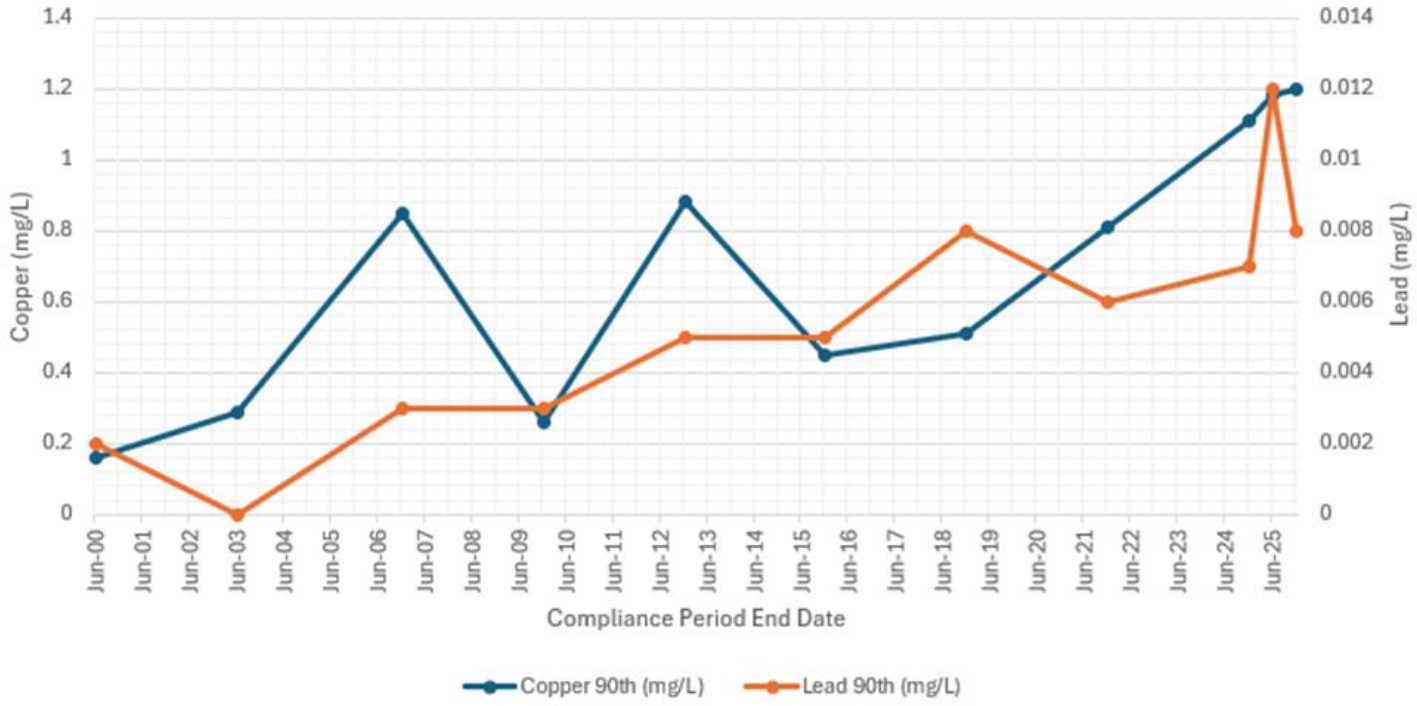
- Trend analysis can support **timely adjustments** to corrosion control treatment, sampling strategies, or operational practices.

Using Graphs to Identify Trends

Creating and maintaining simple graphs of lead and copper 90th percentile results over time allows systems to:

- Quickly visualize changes between monitoring periods
- Spot gradual increases before they reach the action level
- Document system performance for internal planning, sanitary surveys, and regulatory discussions

The graph below presents 25 years of lead and copper 90th percentiles for a water system. An upward trend is clearly evident for both lead and copper. Trending data allows for early intervention to avoid water quality violations.



Graphs are especially helpful during staff transitions, audits, or sanitary surveys, as they provide a **clear historical picture** of system performance.

Taking Action Early

If trends show increasing lead or copper levels, early action can help prevent compliance issues and protect public health. This may include:

- Reviewing corrosion control treatment
- Evaluating source water or operational changes
- Confirming sampling locations and protocols
- Coordinating with technical assistance providers

Keep It Simple and Consistent

Tracking does not need to be complicated. A basic spreadsheet and graph updated after each monitoring period can serve as a powerful management tool.

By consistently tracking and reviewing your 90th percentile results, your system is better positioned to **maintain compliance, protect consumers, and plan proactively**.

For information regarding your latest LCR 90th percentile sampling results see Results of lead sampling for Public Water Systems | Mass.gov. For information regarding historical 90th percentile levels see SDWIS Federal Reporting Services - Report Options.

If you have questions or would like assistance with tracking or trend analysis please contact your regional DWP staff contact or Drinking Water Program program.director-dwp@mass.gov; Subject: LCR Technical Assistance.

10. Water Smart

Water-Smart Program Update

Water-Smart (formally known as the Expanded Assistance Program) provides free analysis of lead drinking water samples and technical assistance to eligible public and private schools and early education and childcare facilities (EECFs) by assisting with sampling, results interpretation, and guidance on remediation actions. The program is funded by a grant from the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust.

Currently, 1,231 schools and EECFs are participating in the program and 1,085 (88%) of participating facilities are within economically disadvantaged communities. To date, 1,127 schools and EECFs have completed testing. Of facilities that have tested and received results, 745 (66%) had one or more lead detections.

Do you know of any schools or childcare facilities that could benefit from the Water-Smart Program? Please identify and encourage schools and childcares within your service area to participate in the program. Eligible facilities may apply for assistance at: Water-Sm art Program Website .

Get Ahead with Lead Testing: Join the Water-Smart Pilot Program for Public Water Systems

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) is proud to invite all Community Public Water Systems (PWS) to the *Water-Smart Pilot Program for PWS* – a forward-thinking initiative designed to help water systems stay ahead of upcoming federal regulations.

Starting **November 1, 2027**, PWS will be **required to offer** lead testing to all primary schools and childcare facilities under the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI). Only schools and childcare facilities that were built on or after January 1, 2014-or have not had plumbing replacements since that date-and are not served by lead, galvanized requiring replacement (GRR), or lead status unknown service lines may be excluded from this requirement. Rather than wait, the *Pilot Program* gives PWS a head start—leveraging the well-established **Water-Smart Program**, which has already tested over 1,000

schools and childcare facilities across the Commonwealth.

Through the pilot program, MassDEP and UMass Amherst cover the cost of lead testing and provide all necessary outreach materials, sampling plans, and follow-up support. PWS simply help identify eligible facilities, assist with local outreach and help collect samples. The process is simple, cost-free, and designed to set you up for success when the rule goes into effect.

Participating in the Pilot Program allows PWS to:

- Offer a valuable service to schools and childcare centers now,
- Fulfill future federal requirements early,
- Build community trust, and
- Access expert technical support at no cost.

Don't wait for 2027—Be Proactive, get ahead today. To join the pilot program or receive more information, email **Program.Director-DWP@mass.gov** with the subject line: **"Pilot Program for PWS."**

11. PFAS Update

Status of PWS that detected PFAS in their finished water

- Currently there are 1,557 active PWS in the state of which 1,418 were required to test for PFAS (have their own water source).
- The Massachusetts PFAS6 Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 20 ppt took effect in October 2020 and 177 PWS (approx. 12%) detected PFAS above the MCL in one or more of their sources. This number includes Community PWS, Non-transient Non-community (NTNC) PWS, and Transient Non-community (TNC) PWS. See Tab 3 of the storymap on our PFAS webpage for details. TNCs are not subject to the MCL but may require an individual health risk assessment depending on the level of PFAS.
- Approximately 163 Community and NTNC PWS had a testing result in 2025 that exceeded the EPA MCLs for PFOS and/or PFOA of 4 ppt (21% of COM and NTNCs). Note that a violation of the PFOS and PFOA MCLs (to begin in 2029) will be based on a running annual average and not a single result.
- PWS PFAS testing results are available to the public on the web in the EEA data portal. Search under the chemical name: "PFAS6" or to see all the PFAS chemicals, search under the contaminant group "PFAS".

Construction projects (See Tab 6 on the PFAS storymap for details of these projects.)

- 81 new water treatment facilities (WTFs) or additions to existing WTFs have been constructed and activated by PWS since 2020 (temporary and permanent systems).
- 38 treatment facilities are under construction with Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loans.
- 9 small PWS were connected to a municipal water system, are no longer using their wells, and were declassified as PWS.

Upcoming changes to the Federal PFAS MCLs

EPA is planning to revise the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations (NPDWR) by rescinding the MCLs for PFHxS, PFNA, HFPO-DA, and the Hazard Index mixture but keeping the MCLs for PFOS and PFOA. See the announcement: EPA Announces It Will Keep Maximum Contaminant Levels for PFOA, PFOS | US EPA. States are required to establish regulations that are no less stringent than the NPDWR within 2 years of the promulgation

of the federal rule (by April 2026). EPA has encouraged all states to apply for an extension due to their plan to rewrite the federal rule/regulation and MassDEP will be submitting an extension request.

Rescinding the MCLs for PFHxS, PNFA, HFPO-DA. and the Hazard Index mixture will not change the number of Massachusetts' PWS that will need to address PFAS (approximately 163 PWS) because any PWS that exceeded one of the rescinded MCLs also exceeded the MCLs of 4 ppt for PFOS and/or PFOA.

Massachusetts PWS compliance with Federal PFAS MCLs – Initial Monitoring

The DWP reviewed the progress of our 676 non-consecutive Community and NTNC PWS to confirm that they have completed initial monitoring under the NPDWR required by April 2027. The regulations allow states to accept previously acquired data from PWS to meet the initial sampling requirements if the testing results meet the data quality and timing requirements. 589 (87% of required PWS) have been sent letters confirming that they have met the initial monitoring requirements; the other 87 (13% of required PWS) have had PFAS sampling added to their 2026 Sampling Schedules.

12. Drinking Water Trivia!

Tickle your brain and test your knowledge on drinking water related information. In each issue, we will ask 1-3 questions and provide the answers somewhere else in the newsletter to encourage your sleuthing skills.

What is the largest watershed in the world?

A. Congo Basin
B. Mississippi Basin
C. Amazon Basin
D. Nile Basin

Check out the other articles while looking for the answer. If you would like to send in a Trivia question or two, please email the question and answer to program.director-dwp@mass.gov, Subject DWP Trivia.

13. Training Calendar

When you need training, please look at the MassDEP Training Calendar for Public Water System Operators.

Board of Certification Training Page and List of Approved Courses

You may also want to go to the Board of Certification of Operators of Drinking Water Supply Facilities Operators Training Webpage and view the approved education courses to sit for examination.

Some Newly Added Trainings on the Calendar

Ask Me Anything! State Revolving Fund (SRF) Technical Assistance & Open Office Hours: I'm confused, where do I start a project?
Monday, January 12, 2026; 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. ET; webinar

Ask Me Anything SRF Office Hours will expand your knowledge and enhance your ability to navigate the SRFs. These sessions are tailored for state agencies, utility operators, and stakeholders who support water infrastructure projects. Each session will feature a specific theme, providing clarity, strategies, and practical insights for preparing and managing an SRF funded project. Participants can attend all sessions or select those that best meet their needs. Register for the webinar: Ask Me Anything! State Revolving Fund (SRF) Technical Assistance & Open Office Hours: I'm confused, where do I start a project?

Finding a Unicorn! Small Wastewater System Funding Series | State Revolving Funds: The Basics
Tuesday, January 13, 2026; 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. ET; webinar
The State Revolving Fund (SRF) programs administered by EPA provide financing for many types of water infrastructure projects, and are implemented by state agencies. How the Clean Water SRF program is implemented will be particular to your location, however there are some fundamental requirements you should be aware of to get started. This session will provide the basics to demystify the Clean Water SRF. Register for the webinar: Finding a Unicorn! Small Wastewater System Funding Series | State Revolving Funds: The Basics

EFCN Webinar: Pipes, Pressure, and a Precious Resource: The Engineering Challenge of Aging Water Infrastructure
Thursday, January 15, 2026; 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. ET; webinar
This webinar will examine the current state of public water systems, focusing on aging infrastructure, the operational and financial risks associated with delayed reinvestment, and the growing need for strategic planning. Participants will discover how modern technologies can improve efficiency, monitoring, and water quality, while addressing the financial challenges that often hinder technology adoption in small systems. The session will also highlight practical pathways forward, including asset management, system consolidation, leadership strategies, and workforce education as foundational elements for long-term sustainability. Building on the work of the Mississippi Water Resources Research Institute (WRRI), this webinar offers a systems-level view on how utilities can enhance resilience and prepare for the future. Register for the webinar: Pipes, Pressure, and a Precious Resource: The Engineering Challenge of Aging Water Infrastructure

An Introduction to Advanced Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems
Tuesday, January 20, 2026; 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. ET; webinar
Innovative and advanced Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS) can offer effective solutions where traditional septic systems fall short, including properties with limited space, challenging soils, or other site constraints. These technologies provide higher levels of treatment, can reduce nutrient loading, and broaden the options available to homeowners and communities. In this webinar, Mark C. Noga, President of Knight Treatment Systems and an onsite wastewater professional with nearly 50 years of experience, will introduce the fundamentals of innovative and advanced treatment units. He will explain how these systems work, when they are most effective, and what factors help determine the right technology for a given site. Register for the webinar: An Introduction to Advanced Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems

EPA Tools & Resources Webinar: Lead (Pb) Overview and Data Mapper
Wednesday, January 21, 2026; 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. ET; webinar

EPA reconstituted a leadership and operational structure for lead (Pb) this past summer, affirming continued progress in reducing lead exposure across environmental media. EPA put forward approaches under Administrator Zeldin for actionable risk communication, cooperative federalism, and private sector innovation while continuing to work under the government-wide 2018 Federal Lead Action Plan and fulfilling its statutory authorities and responsibilities to reduce exposure to lead. More specifically, EPA recently developed a blueprint for identifying potential lead exposures through multimedia data mapping using a systematic, flexible, multi-step process. This webinar will present both an overview of the Administration priorities for lead and a detailed look at this data mapping approach available now for states and partners to use. Register for the webinar: Lead (Pb) Overview and Data Mapping.

Green Infrastructure Webinar Series: Community Engagement for Successful Green Infrastructure
Thursday, January 22, 2026; 12:00 – 1:15 p.m. ET; webinar
Many infrastructure projects are installed and maintained without any public awareness or education about the projects, who they serve, and how decisions are made regarding site selection, design, and operations. Sometimes, the agencies or companies responsible for the infrastructure face retaliation or dissatisfaction from the communities they are trying to serve. Community engagement and education serve as crucial tools to involve the public in the infrastructure in their communities and ensure that the planning and implementation of infrastructure are more equitable, inclusive, and appropriate for the community. In this webinar, we will hear from professionals in Southern Arizona and North Central Texas on applications of communications, environmental justice, and community engagement across multiple scales, from single projects to multi-project Green Infrastructure Programs. Register for webinar: Green Infrastructure Webinar Series: Community Engagement for Successful Green Infrastructure

EPA Webinar: Addressing Natural Hazards in Risk and Resilience Assessments and Emergency Response Plans
Thursday, January 22, 2026; 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. ET; webinar
Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) section 1433, revised by America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) section 2013, requires community water systems (CWS) serving over 3,300 people to prepare (or revise) and certify risk and resilience assessments (RRAs) and emergency response plans (ERPs) to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) every five years. Recertification deadlines are occurring throughout 2025 and 2026. CWSs that serve less than 3,301 people, non-CWSs, wastewater utilities, and stormwater utilities are not required to certify completion of an RRA or ERP to EPA. However, as natural disasters and malevolent acts also affect these utilities, EPA encourages them to develop RRAs and ERPs to plan for potential disruptions. This webinar will focus on natural hazards, highlighting useful data sources and free technical assistance from EPA's Strengthening Water Infrastructure for Tomorrow (SWIFT) initiative to help drinking water utilities, wastewater utilities, and stormwater utilities address natural hazards in their RRAs and ERPs. Register for the webinar: Addressing Natural Hazards in RRAs/ERPs.

RCAP: Virtual Operator Conference
February 3-5, 2026; 11:30-4:30 p.m. ET; webinar
This free, virtual training conference offers drinking water operators a chance to learn more about timely topics, improve fundamental skills, and get support for specific challenges while earning up to 12 hours of TCH credit. While there is no substitute for in-person training, this online event was created to specifically target operators of small and rural public water systems who may not have the means or

ability to travel. Conference instructors are technical assistance providers from the RCAP network. Presentation topics during the conference include drinking water regulations, treatment and distribution, disinfection by-products, asset management, corrosion control, and GIS. Register for the webinar: RCAP Virtual Operator Conference

Trainings by Organization

- **MassDEP**
  Previous Cybersecurity Trainings now on YouTube:
  - Basic Cybersecurity Measures for Water Utilities
  - Ransomware Experiences, Defense, and Response

- **Environmental Finance Center Network Trainings, Webinars and In-Person Trainings**

- **EPA Trainings, Webinars and In-Person Trainings**

- **Mass Rural Water Association Trainings, Webinars and In-Person Trainings**

- **MWWA Trainings, Webinars and In-Person Trainings**

- **NEWWA Trainings, Webinars and In-Person Trainings**

- **Water ISAC Trainings, Webinars and In-Person Trainings**

- **RCAP Solutions Trainings, Webinars and In-Person Trainings**

- **AWWA Trainings, Webinars and In-Person Trainings**

- **New England Section of AWWA, Webinars and In-Person Trainings**

- **SkillWorks**
  - SkillWorks offers Board-approved home-study correspondence courses to satisfy license renewal continuing education requirements. All correspondence courses use paper-based study materials and exams. Course work is submitted by mail. Mailed returns are processed and graded within 24 hours at no extra charge. Courses with optional online exams are processed and graded automatically to provide exam results and a printable Certificate of Completion instantly. View the list of approved courses and purchase a course online at Massachusetts SkillWorks Trainings website.

Training Refresher

If you need a refresher on recently given trainings, you can review several training videos located at The MassDEP Drinking Water Training YouTube Playlist.

14. Cybersecurity, Emergency Preparedness, and You!

PLEASE SHARE THIS CYBERSECURITY INFORATION WITH YOUR SCADA & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STAFF

For additional information and alerts see Cybersecurity Resource Hub for MA Public Water Systems (PWS). The purpose of this hub is to provide resources for public water systems (PWS) to improve cybersecurity defenses, mitigate cyber-attack risks, and enhance overall resiliency and compliance.

Cybersecurity Biweekly Spotlight

Is your PWS scheduled for a sanitary survey in 2026?

If your PWS is scheduled for a sanitary survey in 2026, MassDEP/DWP will inspect your cybersecurity assessment findings and plans during the upcoming sanitary survey cycle. Details here.

Please prepare your PWS for the MassDEP cybersecurity assessment review. Preparation may include:

- Signing up for a FREE USEPA Cybersecurity Assessment EPA's Water Sector Cybersecurity Evaluation Program | US EPA.
- For additional options see https://www.mass.gov/doc/reminder-sanitary-survey-cybersecurity-programassessment-report-inspection/download

EPA launched Cybersecurity Procurement Evaluation Checklist: The Cybersecurity Procurement Evaluation Checklist helps water and wastewater utilities assess the cybersecurity practices of vendors, manufacturers, and service providers. It includes a checklist specifically for Integrators and Managed Service Providers (MSPs) designed for companies that manage and deliver IT services and products to utilities. Link: EPA Cybersecurity Procurement Evaluation Checklist (xlsx).

Grants and Fundings

The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund in partnership with MassDEP/DWP, is offering grants funds of up to **$50,000**, to PWSs that have a cybersecurity risk assessment and use operational technology equipment with an identified cybersecurity risk.

Details here: Public Water Suppliers Cybersecurity Improvements Grant Program | Mass.gov.

15. Supply Chain Reminders

PWSs are reminded to implement the steps identified by DWP using the Steps to Prepare Your PWS For Supply Chain Disruptions Flyer and keep MassDEP/DWP informed of all Supply Chain issues.

EPA Chemical Supplier and Manufacturer Locator Tool : This tool allows water and wastewater utilities to search for suppliers and manufacturers across the U.S. that may be able to fulfill their chemical supply needs and increase resilience to supply chain disruptions. This tool can also be useful for finding alternative chemical suppliers in the case of supply chain shortages.

16. How To Subscribe to the In The Main Newsletter

To subscribe to the *In The Main Newsletter*, send a blank email to join-dep-dwp-subscribers@listserv.state.ma.us.

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. To subscribe to the *In The Main Newsletter*, send a blank email to join-dep-dwp-subscribers@listserv.state.ma.us. 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, visit to the Safe Drinking Water Act Assessment Advisory Committee ("Section 70" Committee) Homepage.

17. Drinking Water Trivia! Answer

Answer: C

The Amazon Basin covers over 7 million square kilometers while the next largest, the Congo Basin, covers 1.3 million