



MassDEP / Drinking Water Program

100 Cambridge Street – 9th Floor; Boston, MA 02114

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

In The Main - The Drinking Water Updates can be found online at:

mass.gov/lists/communication-to-public-water-suppliers or at the Statehouse Archives at:
<https://archives.lib.state.ma.us/handle/2452/826119> which has a searchable database.



View from Richard P. Howe Bridge, Lowell, MA Photo by: Eric Cheung

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2025-03-07

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

Use the search function in the Statehouse Archives at:

<https://archives.lib.state.ma.us/handle/2452/826119>



DWP's Surface Water Protection Program Achieves 30 Years!

There are currently 76 Public Water Systems (PWS) in Massachusetts operating at least one active reservoir and many having multiple active reservoirs. These PWS, which include the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), serve a total population of 5.4 million. The MWRA serves 2.6 million. The remaining 75 PWS serve 2.8 million.

In the mid-1990s, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's (MassDEP) Drinking Water Program (DWP) was given a mandate by the Massachusetts legislature to improve source water protection at public drinking water reservoirs. The ground water component of DWP's Source Water Protection Program for public wells was comprehensive; however, the Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations, specifically section 310 CMR 22.20B for reservoirs, included language from public health codes from the 1930s, referring to privies and other land uses and activities that were out of date.

A staff person was hired in the spring of 1995 to develop and implement a plan for improvements and oversee its implementation. An internal advisory committee, composed of MassDEP staff, and an external advisory committee, composed of public water suppliers, water works associations, public health organizations, watershed groups and other state programs, were formed.

Ideas were discussed, presentations were made across the state, comments were incorporated, and pilot programs were conducted one-on-one with public water suppliers who volunteered to test out the new improvements.

The following components were implemented to start.

- New protection Zones A, B, C for reservoirs were defined and mapped: [MassGIS Data: Surface Water Supply Protection Areas \(ZONE A, B, C\) | Mass.gov](#).
- A draft map was printed for each PWS to review for accuracy and final maps were mailed to each PWS.
- A guidance document was developed to write local surface water supply protection plans and incentives were created for voluntary plans: [Developing a Local Surface Water Supply Protection Plan \(May 2000\) | Mass.gov](#).
- Requirements for the adoption of local land use controls, or best effort, and model documents were provided: [Groundwater, Wellhead Protection, and Surface Water Supplies | Mass.gov](#).
- New Source Water Protection review criteria for the water quality monitoring waiver program were developed.
- Statewide workshops and other trainings were created and conducted.
- Day-to-day technical and compliance assistance to PWS, municipal officials and staff, and others were provided.
- Assistance to communities with adopting water supply protection land use controls and protection plans was offered.
- Facts sheets, guidance, forms and other outreach materials were written [Groundwater, Wellhead Protection, and Surface Water Supplies | Mass.gov](#).
- Coordination with MassDEP's Water Management Program staff on permit conditions for land use controls, best effort and protection plan requirements was established.
- Long-term partnerships with other state programs; MassDEP's Title 5, Mass. Surface Water Quality Standards, Wetlands Program; Mass. Department of Agricultural Resources; Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of Water Supply Protection; Mass. Forestry Program; and many more were put in place.

Over the past 30 years, numerous programs have been added for reservoirs under the Source Water Protection Program. Here are some examples.

- Participate in the Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Program, which awards money to PWS to purchase land and conservation restrictions for water supply protection: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drinking-water-supply-protection-grant-program>.
- Continue to conduct training, technical and compliance assistance and outreach for PWS and others.
- Continue to assist communities with adopting water supply protection land use controls and protection plans.
- Represent MassDEP on the State Pesticide Board: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-pesticide-board>.
- Represent MassDEP on the State Rights-of-Way Panel: <https://www.mass.gov/rights-of-way-vegetation-management>.
- Provide backup for MassDEP's representative on the State Reclamation and Mosquito Control Board: <https://www.mass.gov/state-reclamation-and-mosquito-control-board-srmcb>.
- Issue Annual Reminders for PWS Applying Pesticides to Reservoirs: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/applying-pesticides-to-reservoirs-checklist-0/download>.
- Participate in planning and follow up for aerial spraying from planes for mosquitoes: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/mosquito-control-and-spraying>.
- Developed guidance and policy and review solar installations proposed on land owned/controlled by PWS: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drinking-water-policies-and-guidance>.
- Developed guidance and forms to determine threats to public water from beaver and muskrat: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/guidance-threat-to-water-supplies-due-to-beavers-or-muskkrats>.
- Provide technical assistance/consultation to Regional Drinking Water Program staff regarding SWP topics such as watershed public access, land protection, cemetery reviews, beaver determinations, solar reviews, etc.
- Participate on the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) Source Water Protection Work Group with the New England states and New York <https://neiwpcc.org/our-programs/gwswp/gwswp-workgroup/>.
- Participate on the Joint Association of State Drinking Water Administrators/Ground Water Protection Council Source Water Protection Work Group: <https://www.gwpc.org/work-group/asdwa-gwpc-source-water-protection-committee/>.
- Participate in planning and addressing harmful algal blooms.
- Work with partners on aquatic invasives.
- Work with forestry programs on watershed terrestrial invasives.
- Review watershed protection programs for 29 reservoirs with disinfection log credit.
- Review watershed protection programs annually for 7 reservoirs at 4 PWS with filtration waivers.
- Conduct the annual filtration waiver review for Wachusett Reservoir and watershed.
- Review and approve Mass. DCR watershed protection plans and public access plans for MWRA reservoirs.
- Continue long-term coordination with other MassDEP and state programs, such as the Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), Department of Conservation and Recreation (Mass. DCR) Division of Water Supply Protection, Mass. DCR Forestry Program, etc.
- Developed and maintain a self-guided SWP training for PWS at <https://classes.wateroperator.org/courses/source-water-protection-in-massachusetts>.

What's Next?

Staff will continue to conduct a comprehensive protection program; monitor emerging issues and hot topics that have the potential to impact drinking water reservoirs; disseminate information to PWS; and seek input from PWS on program components.



Do you have any stories or information to share about your Surface Water Protection Program and source water protection work? Please let us know at program.director-dwp@mass.gov and we may include your information in a future In the Main newsletter article.

Contact program.director-dwp@mass.gov with questions or to request more information.

Drinking Water Program Staff Recognized at MassDEP Performance Recognition Ceremony

On Wednesday, February 26, 2025, three Drinking Water Program staff were recognized for their incredible work supporting our safe drinking water program during the MassDEP Performance Recognition Ceremony.

Boston staff member **Tio Yano**, nominated by Yvette DePeiza, Director of the Drinking Water Program, was recognized for his work creating tools for DWP staff and PWS. Yvette DePeiza had the following words regarding Tio:

Tio is the definition of quiet perfection. There is nothing he cannot do and will not do to support the MassDEP/DWP mission safe drinking water and public health protection. DWP and DEP has been fortunate to have him as asset. He has saved our PWSs and communities millions of dollars for DWP compliance and enforcement actions with the amazing and creative tools he has developed for DWP, PWS and consumer use. If I ruled the world, I would create a Tio Yano Drinking Water day!

Tools developed by Tio include:

- Mass Lead Service Line Identification (MA-LSLI) Web App
- Crowd sourcing app for consumers to assist local PWS with service line identification
- Public Water Supplier Document Search
- MassDEP Drinking Water Program | Public Health Orders
- Electronic sampling site plan for Lead and Copper Rule
- Lead in Schools records management tool for schools and daycare facilities to manage their sampling sites, results and corrective actions records

SERO DW Section Chief **Jim McLaughlin**, nominated by Jennifer Viveiros, Deputy Regional Director SERO, was nominated for the Manuel Carballo Governor's Award for Excellence in Public Service. Jennifer Viveiros had the following words regarding Jim:

Jim embodies the quintessential nerdy engineer you might see from a TV sitcom. He thrives on order, rules, and pays meticulous attention to details, yet he excels at educating his colleagues and the public. He can often be found in the office lobby answering questions from a concerned citizen or explaining complicated regulations to a small business owner.

Jim's dedication to public service is unparalleled. He firmly believes that public employees owe it to taxpayers to be competent, efficient, and productive, and he leads by example. He often reminds staff, "Remember you are on the state's dollar, so don't waste the public's money!" He works everyday as if it's his mission to prove Howie Carr wrong.

Jim is dedicated to the "customers," as he calls them—the regulated community of water suppliers—and serves as a responsive advocate for them. He genuinely cares about the work he and his staff do and offers to work with the regulated community to get them on track rather than penalize them. Extremely knowledgeable and utmost professional, he tackles his responsibilities with enthusiasm. Balancing multiple projects, he provides support to operators, colleagues, and most importantly, the public, ensuring safe drinking water and offering peace of mind.

As Section Chief, Jim goes to great lengths to ensure his staff receive adequate training, even developing training programs himself when none exist. He stays ahead of new programs or regulations and personally trains new team members. As an enthusiastic mentor, he advocates for his staff, ensuring they have the right tools to excel and advance in their careers. Jim is compassionate, always encouraging staff to take time off, and willingly steps in to cover their work.

The transition to hybrid work has presented new challenges to MassDEP. Managers and supervisors have had to be creative to foster a team atmosphere in this new environment. Jim has excelled at filling the gaps—checking in with each staff person, personally mentoring new staff (even those outside his program) and celebrating the end of a long inspection season with pizza, popsicles, and ice cream sandwiches.

Beyond his duties in the drinking water program, Jim quietly works behind the scenes to lighten the load of other staff members. Whether it's taking out the recycling, walking the outgoing mail to the post office, or clearing snow from state vehicles before dawn on a snowy day, Jim goes above and beyond because that's simply who he is.

I am honored to nominate Jim for this award, a sentiment shared by his loyal team. Their dedication reflects the true honor of leadership—earning respect and recognition from those you lead.

SERO staff member **Bill Schwartz**, nominated by Jim McLaughlin, DWP Section Chief, SERO, was recognized for his hard work in the SERO DWP in the face of several SERO staff turnovers and leaves of absence. Jim McLaughlin had the following words regarding Bill:

William “Bill” Schwartz joined MassDEP in 2018 and instantly became a key member of the Southeast Region’s (SERO) Drinking Water Program (DWP). Bill has ten years’ experience as a drinking water operator, attaining the highest Treatment-4 and Distribution-4 operator certification levels with surface water treatment experience. In 2020, Bill was tasked with being SERO-DWP’s PFAS manager, becoming involved with the development and implementation of the Drinking Water PFAS Regulations enacted in October, 2020. Bill’s PFAS duties include: countless meetings; providing guidance to operators, various officials, and the general public; reviewing laboratory data; reviewing public education and notification materials; and conducting enforcement. Bill is part of the Water Quality Section, implementing other water quality programs in addition to PFAS, along with conducting sanitary survey inspections and special inspections. Bill handles many calls from private well owners.

From December, 2023, through May, 2024, SERO-DWP lost three relatively new hires, and the Water Quality Coordinator had an extended leave. Bill was alone to manage much of the work done by those people. Never complaining, and never saying “no,” Bill did yeoman’s work to keep up with the demands, even during an EPA audit. Two of the people still have not been replaced as of February, 2025, and Bill continues making an outsized contribution to the DWP section.

Bill’s experience as a drinking water operator is invaluable as a regulator. He possesses a depth and breadth of knowledge, skills and abilities that enables the SERO-DWP team to more effectively protect public health. Bill has a tremendous work ethic and impeccable integrity which no level of training can instill. He’ll rarely mention his military service, but Bill embodies the Marine Corps values of honor, courage and commitment.

Bill Schwartz embodies all that is good in government service. Bill is proof that **who** does the work matters. MassDEP is very fortunate to have someone of Bill’s character on our team.

Congratulations to Tio, Jim, and Bill on their hard work and dedication to the safe drinking water, public health protection and the Drinking Water Program!

AWIA Compliance Round 2 – RRA Certification for Large COM PWS Due This Month!

Deadlines for submitting certification that your Public Water System has updated its Risk and Resiliency Assessment (RRA) and Emergency Response Plan (ERP) are fast approaching. **Community Public Water Systems serving a population of over 100,000 must certify updates to their RRA by March 31, 2025 – at the end of this month!**

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 30, 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 <https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/awia-section-2013>.

How do I certify my RRA and ERP?

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 <https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/how-certify-your-risk-and-resilience-assessment-or-emergency-response-plan>. **Do not submit your updated RRA and ERP to EPA or to MassDEP, as those documents may contain sensitive information about your system.**

MassDEP 1-Month RRA Certification Reminder for Community PWS Serving Over 100,000

On February 28, 2025, MassDEP/DWP sent a letter to Community PWS serving over 100,000 to provide a 1-month reminder about the RRA certification deadline of March 31, 2025. You can find that letter at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/remind-1-month-notice-for-risk-and-resilience-assessment-rra-certification-for-pws-serving-100000/download>.

EPA Reminder and Upcoming Training

On Friday, February 28, 2025, EPA emailed Community PWS serving over 100,000 reminding them to certify the updates to their RRAs and ERPs by the required deadlines. **Additionally, EPA is hosting SDWA 1433 Office Hours to answer questions that PWS may have about completing or certifying their RRAs. Interested PWS can sign up for the Office Hours at <https://doodle.com/meeting/participate/id/b4V7Q36e/vote>.** More information about certifying RRAs and ERPs is located at <https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/updating-your-awia-rra-and-erp>.

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: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/guidelines-for-public-water-systems-chapter-12-emergency-response-planning-o/download>

- MassDEP *In the Main*, March 7, 2024 - “Planning Ahead for Round 2 of AWIA Compliance in 2025/2026”: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/in-the-main-drinking-water-program-updates-03-07-2024/download>
 - MassDEP *In the Main*, September 6, 2024 – “AWIA Compliance Round 2: Tips for Preparing Your RRAs and ERPs”: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/in-the-main-drinking-water-program-updates-09-06-2024/download>
 - MassDEP *In the Main*, December 13, 2024 – “AWIA Compliance Round 2: Deadlines in the New Year! Article Highlight: Risk and Resiliency Assessments”: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/in-the-main-drinking-water-program-updates-12-13-2024/download>
 - MassDEP *In the Main*, January 10, 2025 – “AWIA Compliance Round 2: Deadlines Start This Year!”: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/in-the-main-drinking-water-program-updates-01-10-2025/download>
 - EPA Drinking Water and Wastewater Resilience: <https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience>
 - EPA Water Resilience - AWIA Section 2013: <https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/awia-section-2013>
 - EPA How to Certify Your RRA or ERP: <https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/how-certify-your-risk-and-resilience-assessment-or-emergency-response-plan>
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LCRR Information

Attention! Did you Receive an Email Recently about the Status of your SLI?

Did you receive an email on Friday, February 28, 2025 or Monday, March 3, with the subject: **Attention! SLI Correction and Resubmission Required by March 14, 2025?**

A targeted email was sent to all PWS who are past the deadline to resubmit their SLI and/or accompanying certification forms. As a reminder, your SLI/certification forms must be resubmitted by **March 14, 2025**.

Please check your inbox for this email if your SLI has not been accepted yet, or if you are unaware of the status of your SLI submission.

As of March 4, 2025, 556 SLIs have been deemed acceptable by MassDEP DWP, and will be receiving an SLI approval letter soon this year.

Helpful Resources to Answering Consumer Questions when Receiving these Notices

PWS should check, and may refer consumers to the MassDEP [LCRR Consumer’s Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#). This webpage is a compilation of frequently asked questions regarding consumer notices, SLIs, what a service line is, and so on.

Do you have questions your consumers are asking that aren’t featured on the FAQ webpage? Let us know by emailing us at the program.director-dwp@mass.gov webpage, Subject: LCRR Consumer FAQs.

The Consumer FAQ webpage is featured on the [Lead in Drinking Water](#) homepage: <https://www.mass.gov/lead-in-drinking-water>

Getting Ready for the LCRI

Prepare for Non-Lead Validations

The LCRI requires that PWS create validation pools of non-lead service lines and physically inspect a percentage of that pool to make sure these service lines are made of a non-lead material. See the [January ITM edition](#) for more information on preparing for non-lead validations: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/in-the-main-drinking-water-program-updates-01-10-2025/download>

EPA LCRI Resources

The EPA has a [webpage](https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinkingwater/lead-and-copper-rule-improvements) dedicated to the LCRI, available here: <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinkingwater/lead-and-copper-rule-improvements>

EPA has also released a variety of [LCRI Supporting Materials](https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/lead-and-copper-rule-improvements-supporting-materials), including fact sheets and technical documents: <https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/lead-and-copper-rule-improvements-supporting-materials>.

Job Opportunity: Director of WES and the Division of Environmental Laboratory Sciences

MassDEP is seeking a highly experienced and dynamic environmental laboratory professional to serve as the Director of the Division of Environmental Laboratory Sciences and of the historic Senator William X. Wall Experiment Station, the Massachusetts state environmental laboratory LEED-platinum facility in Lawrence, MA. For more information about the Director's position and how to apply, those interested can visit: https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=250002A3&tz=GMT-05%3A00&tzname=America%2FNew_York

Reminder - Annual Statistical Report (ASR) Due on March 31, 2025

All systems active during the 2024 calendar year are required to submit an ASR per 310 CMR 22.15.

The Annual Statistical Report is due on Monday, March 31st. All public water systems are required to submit the Annual Statistical Report. More information, including instructions, tips, and worksheets can be found on our webpage at <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/public-water-supply-annual-statistical-reporting-via-edep>.

- For assistance with eDEP (logging in, resetting passwords, etc.): eDEP Support Desk (edep-support@mass.gov)
 - For assistance with filling out the Annual Statistical Report: Sage Grace (sage.grace@mass.gov), Tio Yano (tio.yano@mass.gov), Andrew Durham (andrew.durham@mass.gov)
 - For assistance with filling out the Water Management Act Forms of the Annual Statistical Report: Jen D'Urso (jen.durso@mass.gov)
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Requests for Quotes due March 26: Engineering Assistance for Small Public Water Suppliers

Developing Engineering & Design Plans to Help Small PWS Get Financial Assistance

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) is soliciting proposals through a **Request for Quotes (RFQ)**, from **qualified environmental engineering consulting firms off of the Operational Services Division's (OSD) [Statewide Contract PRF77](https://www.mass.gov/doc/prf77designatedddcamm/download)**, Category B - Design and Construction Administration (<https://www.mass.gov/doc/prf77designatedddcamm/download>) for the selection of multiple qualified engineering consultants, to develop engineering and design plans for the mitigation of emerging contaminants including PFAS for Small and Disadvantaged Community (COM) and Non-Transient Non-Community (NTNC) Public Water Systems

(PWS). MassDEP is seeking to hire engineering consultants to plan and design public water system modifications, consolidations, interconnections, or new public water systems to address emerging contaminants in drinking water for small PWS.

Many Public Water Systems (PWS) in Massachusetts have detected PFAS and other emerging contaminants in their drinking water at levels exceeding regulatory standards. Small PWS often do not have the technical or financial capacity to develop the necessary engineering and design plans to address the contamination, which is a necessary precursor to apply for grants, loans, or financial assistance to remediate the issue. The results of this RFQ and program will assist these small PWS.

Firms hired through this RFQ by MassDEP will provide engineering and design planning assistance to such PWS, with the goal of putting them in a position to be able to apply for financial assistance. The design plans developed by these firms may enable small PWS to apply for financial assistance from the State Revolving Fund to implement a project; qualify for an Emerging Contaminants in a Small or Disadvantaged Communities ([EC-SDC](#)) grant offered through the MassDEP DWP; and/or proceed with other financial support opportunities. With readiness to proceed being a significant eligibility criterion for financial assistance, many small PWS will benefit from these planning and design services. PWS eligible for these services must be located in a small community (COM) serving under 10,000 residents, a Non-Transient Non-Community (NTNC), or a non-profit transient non-Community (TNC) Public Water Systems (PWS). It is important to note that there are specific requirements involved for different financial assistance options. For example, a PWS that is small but not disadvantaged must be able to demonstrate lack of capacity to incur debt sufficient to finance a project to be eligible for an EC-SDC grant. In contrast, to be eligible for an SRF loan, the opposite holds true – a PWS must have the capacity to incur debt.



The deadline for qualified environmental engineering consulting firms to submit quotes is March 26, 2025. The goal is to have engineering firm(s) ready to work with PWS by mid to late April. Contact the Drinking Water Program at drinking-water.dwp@mass.gov, Subject: Engineering Consultant Request for Quotes, and CC Janine Bishop (Janine.Bishop@mass.gov) for more information.

Lead in Schools and Childcare Facilities Drinking Water Update

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, 1,094 schools and EECFs are participating in the program and 697 (64%) of participating facilities are within environmental justice communities. To date, 953 schools and EECFs have completed testing. Of facilities that have tested and received results, 640 (67%) 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 https://script.google.com/macros/s/AKfycbyr_U8wEMrA-Q2XifkK4l58x4GDtYrltvpKIKUAhSxpW9pSZtA/exec

PFAS Update

PFAS Webpage Redesign on Mass.gov

On February 7, 2025, MassDEP launched a new webpage to serve as a hub for PFAS content across Mass.gov:

[Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances \(PFAS\) | Mass.gov](#)

MassDEP developed this page to support expansion of this important topic area, which has grown considerably since the first PFAS page was published on the website. This new page includes a **Featured** section, which shows the top three most visited webpages related to PFAS.

The drinking water PFAS information continues to be available at a new URL:

[Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances \(PFAS\) in Drinking Water | Mass.gov](#)


Introductory PFAS information is now available at:

[What are PFAS? | Mass.gov](#)

MassDEP will continue to improve the website based on feedback from our users. Like with all Mass.gov pages, you can submit feedback on MassDEP's different PFAS pages through the green Feedback button on the bottom righthand side of the screen.

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Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

Learn about a group of contaminants in the environment called Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Find out where they have been found and what Massachusetts is doing to address them.

First Time? Start here.

What are PFAS? →

What would you like to do?

Featured

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) in Drinking Water →

PFAS in Private Well Drinking Water Supplies FAQ →

Massachusetts PFAS Drinking Water Standard (MCL) →

Energy & Environmental Affairs Data Portal

Drinking Water PFAS Data →

Wastewater NPDES & Residuals PFAS Data →

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.

Q: How are protection areas designated for Surface Water sources?

- A. Zone I, II, and III
- B. Zone A, B, and C
- C. Zone 1st, 2nd, and 3rd
- D. Zone SWA, SWB, and SWC

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.

Training Calendar

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>.

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 page and view the approved education courses to sit for examination. Go to: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/board-of-certification-of-operators-of-drinking-water-supply-facilities-approved-education-courses-to-sit-for-examination>

Some Newly Added Trainings on the Calendar

Water Treatment Operator Level Two – March 2025

Monday, March 10-April 11; webinar

This course offers a comprehensive discussion of water treatment processes, their uses, characteristics, and calculations. It is designed to teach the skills and knowledge that you will need to know as a Level 2 operator. Learn concepts and practices about conventional water treatment processes, membrane/UV processes, and basic laboratory and sampling skills. WTO Level 2 provides an in-depth understanding of surface water treatment, groundwater treatment, and the particular parameters that dictate the successful treatment of both sources. This course builds upon your learning from the Level 1 course by focusing on analysis and problem-solving for conventional treatment processes, as well as introducing concepts for advanced treatment processes. Consider taking Water Treatment Operator Level 1 before this course if you have not already. \$375.00 Member price

\$525.00 Non-member price. [Register here](#)

CCC325AT: CROSS-CONNECTIONS SURVEYOR TRAINING

Tuesday, March 11-13; 8:30 – 4:00 p.m. ET; Holliston, MA; in-person

This 3-day course will allow students to learn the professional skills required to become a NEWWA Certified Cross Connection Control Surveyor. This course includes both classroom-based as well as field instruction and a written examination. Topics covered include terminology; where to look for cross connections; how to assess the degree of hazards; how to set up a cross connection control action plan and conduct a survey; how to review drawings and plans; the roles of the public water system, plumbing inspectors, states, local government, and others; how to utilize the six methods of protecting a cross connection; a review of the basic hydraulics of backflow and devices; and how to complete the common survey report forms. Each participant will receive a copy of the "AWWA Manual (M14), Recommended Practice for Backflow Prevention," pertinent plumbing code information by state, sample survey sheets, and other handouts such as segments of as-built drawings and plans. 1.7 CEUs Course code: CCC325AT, \$585 member/\$745 non-member [Register here](#)

LCI225AY: CURRENT ISSUES IMPACTING DRINKING WATER LABORATORIES

Wednesday, March 12; 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. ET; Holliston, MA; in-person

This full-day event offers crucial updates on PFAS and LCRI regulations and laboratory practices, along with interactive learning stations covering key topics like jar testing, chlorine measurement, and UV-254 absorbance/transmittance. Participants will also dive deep into topics such as the EPA's Water Laboratory Alliance Coordination & Response Plan, reading/ writing standard operating procedures & laboratory reports and preparing for state laboratory audits. Enjoy networking opportunities with exhibitors, connect with experts, and enhance your skills in laboratory operations. The discounted fee for members is \$195. Full price is \$355. [Register here](#)

Water Treatment Operator Level Two – March 2025

Wednesday, March 12; 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET; webinar

Chlorine dioxide is an effective pre-oxidation and disinfection chemical that does not form high levels of regulated trihalomethanes and haloacetic acids. This webinar will help utilities evaluate the potential application of chlorine dioxide in their systems. \$75-member, \$120-nonmember. [Register here](#)

EPA ORD Emergency Response Webinar - Managing Contaminated Drinking Water Post-Hurricane

Wednesday, March 12; 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. ET; webinar

Drinking water infrastructure may become contaminated during a hurricane by tidal surge, flooding, pollutants in the water, or physical damage to the distribution system. Many communities experienced damage to drinking water systems following Hurricanes Harvey and Maria (2017), and as recently as Helene (2024). When community infrastructure is damaged from storms, contaminated floodwaters can become a problem. It is important for emergency responders to understand how water systems can be decontaminated and returned to service so that communities can begin to recover. This webinar will discuss a simulated post-hurricane contamination of a drinking water distribution system that was conducted at EPA's Water Security Test Bed (WSTB), a first-of-its-scale replication of a typical municipal drinking water piping system. The WSTB allows researchers and responders to better understand that behavior of water systems under real-world conditions. For this experiment, the 450-foot long pipe and associated premise plumbing were contaminated with diesel fuel, saltwater, and E. coli. The presenter will discuss how the system was monitored before, during, and after decontamination and provide the results. [Register here](#)

Monitoring & Reporting Distribution System Chlorine Residuals

Thursday, March 13; 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. ET; webinar

Monitoring the chlorine residual in the distribution system is not only important for understanding distribution system water quality but it is also a regulatory requirement. This training will provide an overview of chlorine chemistry and the proper use of the most common chlorine residual test kits. Attendees will learn about good sampling techniques and mistakes to avoid. MassDEP will review the regulatory requirements of chlorine reporting and compliance. This will be a valuable training for anyone involved in distribution system sampling. Cost: \$40 Members; \$70 Nonmembers.

[Register here](#)

BBL325AT: THE FUNDAMENTALS OF READING PRINTS AND DRAWINGS

Tuesday, March 18; 8:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m. ET; Holliston, MA; in-person

This course will help participants develop an understanding of how working drawings are organized, and how to utilize the information contained in them. You will receive instruction in reading several types of drawings including: site plans, floor plans, sections, and details, including architectural, mechanical, and plumbing drawings. It will also present a step-by-step guide to where specific types of information can be found in a set of working drawings; teach you practical, easy concepts to remember and procedures for orienting yourself with a new set of working drawings; and provide you with the skills you need to read and understand the information in engineering drawings. 0.6 CEUs

BBL325AT; \$195 Member/ \$355 Non-Member. [Register here](#)

Strengthening Small Wastewater Systems: Technical Assistance in Obtaining Funding

Tuesday, March 18; 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. ET; webinar

Small, rural and Tribal water systems face unique challenges in managing wastewater and stormwater. This webinar will highlight resources communities are using to address these challenges, from technical assistance supporting system need evaluation, project development, and capacity-building, to support accessing funding and financing to pay for system improvements. WaterNow and representatives of small wastewater systems will provide an overview of currently available programs, share stories from participating communities and utilities, and provide insight on the process of from an applicant's perspective. [Register here](#)

WBF325AT: BIOFILM IN YOUR DRINKING WATER SYSTEM: CONCERNS AND CONTROLS

Wednesday, March 19; 8:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. ET; Townsend, MA; in-person

If you distribute water, you have biofilm in your system! This course will provide a brief overview of biofilm, why its presence in a distribution system is a concern, and how to control and prevent problems. In addition, participants will have an opportunity to examine common locations of biofilm in a system, review the appropriate steps to physically and chemically control biofilm, and explore the various methods used to identify the presence or absence of troublesome biofilm. March 19, 2025 8:30am - 11:45am; WBF325AT; 0.3 CEUs \$145 Member / \$305 Non-Member.

[Register here](#)

TPT325AT: HYBRID CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES OF BASIC DRINKING WATER TREATMENT, T2

Wednesday, March 19-June 11; 8:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. ET; Holliston, MA; in-person

Do you prefer to attend classes online or in-person? The choice is yours! NEWWA is now offering this course in a hybrid format. This allows the student to either choose to attend fully in-person, or online (with the option to complete the lab sessions in either format). When registering, just select which option you would prefer. This hybrid course will help you prepare for the Grade T2 operator exam. Successful completion of this course meets the requirements of the MA Board of Certification of Operators of Drinking Water Facilities in order to be able to sit for the Grade T2 state certification exam. Topics covered include: solving word problems; public health, safety, and importance of water treatment; ground and surface water treatment basics; SDWA; source water problems and pretreatment; coagulation, flocculation, clarification, settling, and filtering; disinfection methods and byproducts; iron and manganese removal and residuals; sampling; chemical feed systems; alarms and controls; and safety. Wednesday mornings 8:30am-11:45am, TPT325AT, \$1150 member/ \$1,310 Non-member *Add \$25 per student if online student wants their books shipped. [Register here](#)

New England Environmental Finance Center (NEEFC): Massachusetts Grant Funding Workshop

Wednesday, March 19; 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. ET; webinar

Many communities face challenges when addressing water quality, flooding and/or other climate change impacts – especially when it comes to identifying funding sources to support their projects. While there are a variety of funding programs available in Massachusetts, navigating each program's requirements, determining which projects are a best fit for each opportunity, and crafting competitive proposals can be challenging. This webinar will showcase key state, regional, and federal funding opportunities for projects focused on water quality, water infrastructure, stormwater management, watershed/ecological restoration, and climate resilience. Representatives from each funding agency will provide a brief overview of their programs and opportunities. Additionally, the NEEFC will highlight a few assistance programs for communities, municipalities, and tribes, offering free training, technical help, and support with funding applications. Representatives from each funding agency and assistance program will be available for questions following the presentation in zoom breakout rooms. Attendees are encouraged to come with questions and/or project ideas for discussion and feedback from grant program representatives. [Register here](#)

New Administration, New Congress, and Complying with Recent Rulemakings

Wednesday, March 19; 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. ET; webinar

This webinar is a status report and a look ahead at the federal water policy landscape, taking into account this year's new Congress and change in administration. The webinar will include focused discussion of early implementation considerations under the LCRI and PFAS. There is no doubt that there has been a flurry of executive actions coming from the White House and being implemented across federal agencies since the inauguration. Likewise, the new Congress has started to lay down new priorities moving forward. Although there are many open questions, this webinar will begin by overviewing key actions that have changed the picture for the water sector and emphasize aspects that remain steadfast. This webinar will also provide an overview of activities water systems need to take to prepare for compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) and the Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Rule (PFAS Rule). \$75-member, \$120-nonmember. [Register here](#)

TIM325BT: IRON & MANGANESE REMOVAL CHEMISTRY

Thursday, March 20; 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. ET; Holliston, MA; in-person

This course will help participants describe characteristics of Iron (Fe) and Manganese (Mn); describe the value of removing Fe and Mn; describe basic treatment methods and processes for removing Fe and Mn; perform basic calculations relating to Fe and Mn treatment methods; discuss chemical application and feed methods; and identify potential problems and corrective actions. TIM325BT March 20, 2025; 8:30am - 3:30pm; 0.6 \$195 Member / \$355 Non-Member. [Register here](#)

TAP325AT: HYBRID CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES OF ADVANCED DRINKING WTR TREATMENT T3/T4

Thursday, March 20-June 12; 8:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. ET; Holliston, MA; in-person or online

Do you prefer to attend classes online or in-person? The choice is yours! NEWWA is now offering this course in a hybrid format. This allows the student to either choose to attend fully in-person, or online (with the option to complete the

lab sessions in either format). When registering, just select which option you would prefer. This course will help you prepare for the Grade T3 and/or T4 operator exam. Topics covered include: word problems; chemistry; public health, safety, and importance of water treatment; ground and surface water treatment concerns; SDWA; disinfection methods and byproducts; filtration and treatment plant residuals handling; coagulation, flocculation, clarification, settling, and filtering; disinfection methods and byproducts; sampling; chemical feed systems; electric motors; alarms and controls; and safety. Successful completion of this course meets the requirements of the MA Board of Certification of Operators of Drinking Water Facilities to be able to sit for the Grade T3 and T4 state certification exams. Thursday mornings 8:30am-11:45am, 3.6 CEUs, \$1150 member/ \$1310 non-member *Add \$25 per student if online student wants their books shipped to them. [Register here](#)

Smart Solutions for Small Systems: Harnessing Technology for Efficiency, Compliance, and Sustainability

Thursday, March 19; 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. ET; webinar

Small wastewater treatment systems face significant challenges, including aging infrastructure, evolving regulatory requirements, and limited funding. This webinar will explore how emerging technologies such as automation and smart infrastructure can improve efficiency, enhance sustainability, and improve regulatory compliance. Participants will gain strategies for improving existing infrastructure and implementing cost-effective solutions to make their systems more resilient and future ready. Don't miss this opportunity to gain valuable insights and discover technological advancements that can transform your wastewater treatment plant and benefit your community.

Presenter: Danish Kumar, Climate Change Program Manager, University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center.

[Register here](#)

MassRWA: VSS, D1, & T1 Certification Exam Preparatory Course: 3-Day

March 24, 25, & 28; 7:45 – 3:00 p.m. ET; in-person

The purpose of the VSS, D1, & T1 Certification Exam Preparatory Course is to familiarize students with the Small Water System and Very Small Water System field and teach the responsibilities of certified drinking water operators. This class covers the following topics: water quality sampling, wells and their source protection, water pipes, storage tanks, hydrants, valves, meters, water treatment, how to create reports, and Massachusetts drinking water regulations. We will show you how to use basic math formulas to calculate water storage, pressure, flow, and water usage. This class will get you prepared to pass the VSS, D1, and T1 exams. You will also earn 18 TCH credits for Water Operators. This is a three-day class, and students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes. Each class will be held in person at the Athol Public Library in Athol, MA. [Register here](#)

MassRWA: Upcoming Disaster Recovery/Emergency Response Tabletop Exercises

March 31, April 1, or April 2; 7:45 – 3:00 p.m. ET; in-person

Water and wastewater systems are vital in providing essential services to the communities they serve. However, these systems encounter several challenges that may jeopardize service continuity. These challenges include extreme weather events, failure of critical assets, and malevolent acts. It is crucial to be adequately prepared for these challenges to ensure effective responses and swift recovery, as this responsibility is vital to the sustainability of the communities served. This training will outline the process of developing and implementing emergency response plans, as well as the steps to take during and after an emergency or disaster that affects water and wastewater services. Additionally, the training will outline the funding opportunities for which your system and communities may currently qualify. Operators can earn 7 TCHs by attending this training.

There are currently **three** options for dates and locations of this training. [Register here](#) and select the date you would like to attend.

1. March 31, 2025 – Plymouth, MA
2. April 1, 2025 – Townsend, MA
3. April 2, 2025 – Essex, MA

Developing Effective Standard Operating Procedures

Thursday, March 27; 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. ET; webinar

This 1-hour, no-cost webinar provided by the Environmental Finance Center Network (EFCN) covers the purpose and basic components necessary to develop effective standard operating procedures. Attendees will achieve the following learning objectives:


- Apply utility and industry standards as the basis for SOP development.
- Analyze utility procedures to determine if an SOP is required.
- Differentiate between effective and ineffective SOP contents.
- Identify the basic components of an effective SOP.
- Create standard operating procedure instructions.

Don't miss this opportunity to sharpen your skills, improve your utility's operational consistency, and reduce the guesswork in your processes. [Register here](#)

- **MassDEP**
Previous Cybersecurity Trainings now on YouTube:
 - Basic Cybersecurity Measures for Water Utilities: <https://youtu.be/78v3eAyf1yE>
 - Ransomware Experiences, Defense, and Response: <https://youtu.be/eislsdQnXqE>
- **Environmental Finance Center Network**
For a complete list of trainings webinars and in-person trainings please go to: <https://efcnetwork.org/training-events/>
- **EPA**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to: <https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/drinking-water-training>.
- **Mass Rural Water Association**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to: <https://www.massrwa.org/p/14/Trainings—Events>.
- **MWWA**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to: [MWWA Calendar](#)
- **NEWWA**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to: https://communityhub.newwa.org/nc__upcomingevents.
- **Water ISAC**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to: <https://www.waterisac.org/resources>.
- **RCAP Solutions**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to: <https://www.rcapsolutions.org/events/>
- **AWWA**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to: <https://www.awwa.org/event-calendar/>

Training Refresher

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

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, go <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/safe-drinking-water-act-assessment-advisory-committee-section-70-committee>.

Cybersecurity, Emergency Preparedness, and You!

2025-03-07

PLEASE SHARE THIS CYBERSECURITY INFORMATION 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

Upcoming MassDEP DWP Webinar – Building Cyber Resilience: Essential Steps for the Water Sector(1 TCH for Massachusetts Drinking Water & Wastewater Operators)

Wednesday, March 19, 2025, | 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM EST

What You'll Learn:

- Key cybersecurity risks facing the water sector
- Practical steps to strengthen cyber resilience
- Best available resources for the water sector

Register Here: <https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/5164554994415582979>

Before the training, please be sure to review the attached [guidelines of attendee participation](#) for earning TCHs. Questions? Contact: program.director-dwp@mass.gov

NEW Critical Infrastructure Security Updates:

CISA Releases Eight Industrial Control Systems Advisories

CISA released eight Industrial Control Systems (ICS) advisories on March 4, 2025. These advisories provide timely information about current security issues, vulnerabilities, and exploits surrounding ICS. **More details** [here](#).

For CISA ICS Advisories, Additional Alerts, Updates, and Bulletins : Visit [Cybersecurity Alerts & Advisories | CISA](#)

Reminders

Self-Paced Course on Basic Cybersecurity Measures for Water and Wastewater Systems in Massachusetts (Massachusetts Board of Certification Approved for 1 TCH)

- Participants will learn about water sector threats, basic cybersecurity measures, incident response, system resilience, and valuable resources, with the goal of fostering a culture of cybersecurity within their organizations.

- **Enroll Here Free:** <https://classes.wateroperator.org/courses/cybersecurity>

2025 Sanitary Surveys and Cybersecurity

Is your PWS scheduled for a sanitary survey in 2025? If your PWS is scheduled for a sanitary survey in 2025 MassDEP/DWP will inspect your cybersecurity assessment findings and plans during the upcoming sanitary survey cycle. Any findings will be incorporated in a separate action plan and your PWS will receive technical assistance to assist you to address the findings. Please remember all cybersecurity information is considered as sensitive information and must be kept confidential. If you have any questions on this information, you may also contact the Drinking Water Program at program.director-dwp@mass.gov.

Have you completed a cybersecurity assessment for your PWS? If not, sign up free today!

Register for a free cyber assessment with simple steps by using the following link:

<https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/forms/epas-water-sector-cybersecurity-evaluation-program> .

All PWS are required to have a cybersecurity plan/program and complete a cybersecurity assessment as part of their Emergency Response Planning (ERP) responsibilities.

Please Note: MassDEP includes cybersecurity checks in capacity evaluations for PWS for DWSRF grant and loans and during or after sanitary surveys or as needed. In addition, the DWSRF program encourages cybersecurity assessments through its Asset Management Planning Grant activities, as well as offers financing for cybersecurity related equipment and software. See details here <https://www.mass.gov/state-revolving-fund-srf-financial-assistance-program>

Upcoming Trainings

H2OSecCon 2025

Tuesday, May 20, 2025

A virtual conference dedicated to fortifying the security of the water and wastewater sector. This essential event brings together top industry experts, thought leaders, and innovators to tackle the most pressing security challenges facing water utilities today. [Event details](#)

Supply Chain Reminders

Tools and Resources:

- [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.

PWSs are reminded to implement the steps identified by DWP at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/steps-to-prepare-your-public-water-system-for-supply-chain-disruptions/download> and keep MassDEP/DWP informed of all Supply Chain issues.

Trivia Answer: B