



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

## In the Main Newsletter – 04/17/2026

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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.



*Boston Marathon Monument, Copley Square, Boston – Photo by [Wally Gobetz](#), cropped*

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

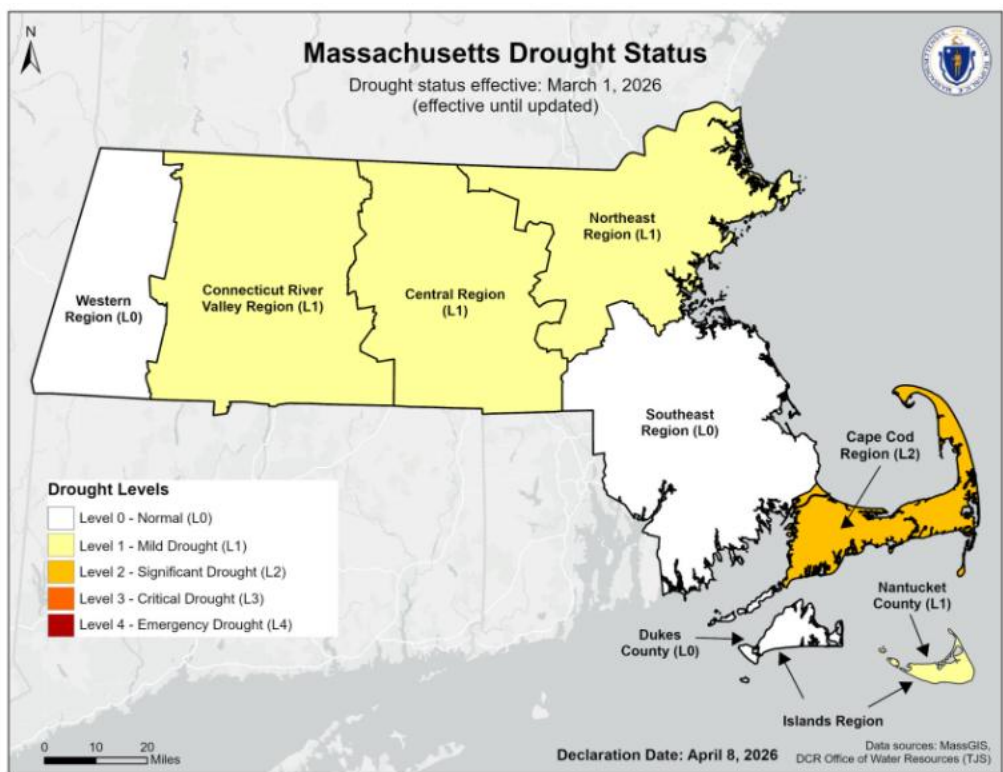
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# 1. Drought Conditions Improve Across Several Regions in Massachusetts

On April 8, 2026, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) declared that drought conditions have improved in several regions in the state due to consistent rainfall in the past month. The Central and Northeast Regions are now in a Level 3-Critical Drought. The Southeast and Western Regions have returned to Normal conditions. The Connecticut River Valley, Central, Northeast, and Nantucket County Regions have improved to a Level 1 – Mild Drought. The Cape Region remains at a Level 2 – Significant Drought. Continued water restrictions and additional precipitation will be needed for full recovery throughout the state. The most recent drought declaration can be read on the [Massachusetts Drought Status webpage](#).



Drought declarations require detailed monitoring of drought conditions; continued coordination among state and federal agencies to advance the implementation of water use restrictions; and engagement with municipalities, including local Boards of Health, to provide technical outreach and assistance to water suppliers and affected municipalities.

Below is a list of resources for communities to use related to drought outreach and education, water conservation, and drought status monitoring.

- The [Massachusetts Drought Dashboard](#) provides regularly updated maps monitoring drought conditions across the state.

- The [Drought Alert Flyer](#) provides information about current drought conditions and how communities across the state can help promote water conservation, fire prevention, and drought preparedness.
- The [Drought Management in Massachusetts webpage](#) includes several recommendations for residents, businesses, and communities during each level of drought (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4) related to water conservation and fire prevention.
- The [Water Resources Toolkit](#) offers many examples of outreach materials for communities to use related to droughts.
- Utilities are encouraged to develop a [Drought Management Plan](#) to identify preparedness, monitoring, response, and outreach procedures related to droughts.
- Information for private well owners can be found at the webpage [Information for Private Well Owners During a Drought](#)
- [Previous issues of In the Main](#) include additional resources related to drought preparedness and response resources.

## 2. EC-SDC Grant PFAS Treatment Technologies Webinar

### Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grant Program

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026 MassDEP Drinking Water Program and UMass Amherst hosted a PFAS webinar. This webinar presented a high-level overview of the most commonly used PFAS treatment technologies for drinking water, including how they work in practice and where they fit best within a treatment process. The webinar discussed and compared key pros, cons, and real-world considerations, including performance, costs, operations, residuals, and implementation, to help you make informed treatment decisions. This webinar also discussed available technical support and a brief summary of the Emerging Contaminants Grant Programs. You can view the training portion of the webinar on the [MassDEP YouTube channel: PFAS Treatment Tech: Options, Trade-Offs, Decision Factors, Tech Support & Grant Programs Training](#).

Visit the [MassDEP Drinking Water Program's Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grant](#) page for more information about the grant program and for a map of grantees.

## 3. Lead and Copper 90th Percentile Update

It is that time again!

MassDEP DWP routinely posts 90th percentile results for the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) on our web page. This posting occurs 3 times per year after each round of LCR monitoring (March 1, September 1 and December 31). Please see the latest update at [Results of lead sampling for Public Water Systems | Mass.gov](#). PWS should note that this latest posting includes a total of 7 PWS which exceeded the current Lead Action Level (AL) of 15 parts per billion (ppb).

### Getting Ready for the LCRI

Under the upcoming Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI), the lead action level will be reduced to 10 parts per billion (ppb). Based on the most recent 90th percentile sampling results noted above, approximately 11 PWS are expected to exceed this new threshold (exceeding 10 ppb, but not exceeding 15 ppb).

Please see the latest update at [Results of lead sampling for Public Water Systems | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/results-of-lead-sampling-for-public-water-systems) and if your latest 90th percentile result is above 10 ppb but below the current LCR lead action level of 15 ppb, now is a good time to begin preparing. Contact the Drinking Water Program at [program.director-dwp@mass.gov](mailto:program.director-dwp@mass.gov), subject: LCRI, to be connected with one of our technical assistance providers for support.

## 4. LCR, LCRR, and LCRI Updates

### Highlighting PWS's Lead and Copper Rule Revision and Improvements (LCRR and LCRI) Work! This Week's Highlight: Town of Andover's LCRI Non-Lead Validations

The Town of Andover is one of many systems which are preparing for the LCRI now, by being proactive and starting LCRI required activities that their system can allocate time and staff for ahead of November 1, 2027.

Under the LCRI, PWS with Non-Lead Service Lines must validate the material of their non-lead service lines, by randomly selecting a subset of the non-lead service lines for a two- point visual inspection. This is required for all COM and NTNC PWS which have non-lead service lines in their inventories.

Andover started the validation process early. First, they reviewed their inventory and determined how many non-lead service lines were required to be included in their non-lead validation pool. Based on that number, they created their validation pool by random selection. Now that the weather is better, Andover is starting to conduct their inspections of their randomly chosen service lines from their validation pool (their inspection group). Their inspection is performed by vacuum excavation and by excavating at the curb stop to have 2 points of visual inspection (1 point on each section of the service line, public and privately owned when required). To make sure that their plan was LCRI compliant, they created a validation proposal and submitted it to MassDEP for review last year, prior to beginning excavations.



*Photo Caption: Town of Andover Conducting Non-Lead Validations. Photo provided by (anonymous) citizen of Town of Andover.*

#### **Takeaway for PWS:**

Begin planning for and preparing for your Non-Lead Validations early! Systems may need to validate (inspect) as many as 384 service lines at 2 points with an exterior visual inspection. The number of service lines you need to validate is dependent on your total applicable non-lead service lines. This will

typically be done over a 7-year period under the LCRI. See EPA’s Validation Fact Sheet for more information: [EPA LCRI Technical Fact Sheet: Inventory Validation](#).

## MassDEP is looking to highlight your PWS’s work to prepare for the LCRI!

MassDEP is looking for details about:

- your work identifying unknowns and replacing lead/GRR service lines,
- methods of outreach to your consumers that have been helpful to get the lead out/identify unknowns,
- methods to complete and refine your SLI (verification methods, record review methods, etc.), and
- success stories of using the MA-LSLI App!

Share them with MassDEP by emailing them to [program.director-dwp@mass.gov](mailto:program.director-dwp@mass.gov), subject: LCRR/LCRI Highlighted Work.

## 5. Water Smart

### Massachusetts PTA 2026 Annual Convention



The Water-Smart Program attended the Massachusetts Parents and Teachers Association (PTA) 2026 Annual Convention and Health Summit. The Convention lasted two Days, running from Friday April 10 through Saturday April 11. Outreach Coordinator Eduardo Ceballos-Corro represented MassDEP/UMass Amherst, and Marian Berkowitz, a Technical Assistance Provider (TAP) on behalf of UMass Amherst, both attended day one of the convention.

Due to a lack of substitute teachers and time constraints, overall attendance at the summit was lower than expected. Despite this, PTA personnel were able to distribute Water-Smart Program flyers in swag bags distributed to attendees for both event days to increase awareness of the program.

The keynote speakers at the Convention focused on topics affecting school communities, such as student anxiety, mental health, and the importance of community driven support systems. They emphasized the need for collaboration between schools, families, and local organizations to create supportive environments for students.

Although attendance was limited, the Water Smart team made the most of this opportunity by promoting the program during the allotted time. The team also connected with other vendors and exchanged ideas related to increasing enrollment and improving outreach at similar events. One suggestion discussed was the use of branded or engaging promotional materials (swag) to enhance visibility and engagement during future events.

The Water-Smart program will continue attending related conferences in the near future as a means to address the issue of lead in drinking water and promote public health.

## 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, 1,313 schools and EECFs are participating in the program and 1,152 (88%) of participating facilities are within economically disadvantaged communities. To date, 1,179 schools and EECFs have completed testing. Of facilities that have tested and received results, 777 (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-Smart 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 had full 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. For more information or to join the pilot program visit [Water-Smart \(Lead in School Drinking Water\) Pilot Program for Public Water Suppliers | Mass.gov](#), or email [Program.Director-DWP@mass.gov](mailto:Program.Director-DWP@mass.gov) with the subject line: “Pilot Program for PWS.”

## 6. 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.

Who sold the first commercially available water in the United States?

- A. Jackson's Spa
- B. Poland Springs
- C. York Water Company
- D. Schaefferstown Water Company

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

## 7. 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](#)

### **Finding a Unicorn! Small Wastewater System Funding Series: Award Closeout & Single Audits**

Tuesday, April 21, 2026; 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. ET; webinar

This webinar will focus on single audit requirements and how to prepare for a grant audit review. In this session, we'll also cover typical audit findings and how to remedy them, as well as typical award closeout tasks for federal grants. [Register for the webinar Finding a Unicorn! Small Wastewater System Funding Series: Award Closeout & Single Audits](#).

### **Building Coastal Flooding and Hurricane Resilience for Water Sector Utilities: Technical Assistance and Resources from EPA SWIFT**

Wednesday, April 22, 2026; 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. ET; webinar

Get ahead of hurricane season! Learn how SWIFT's experts can provide customized technical assistance to help your utility build resilience to **coastal flooding and hurricane hazards** through risk-informed project planning and investment. Review this year's hurricane season outlook, learn about the SWIFT technical assistance process, and explore tools that can help your utility better understand and assess system impacts and identify resilient solutions. [Register for the webinar: Building Coastal Flooding and](#)

[Hurricane Resilience for Water Sector Utilities: Technical Assistance and Resources from EPA's SWIFT Initiative.](#)

### **The Essentials of Collaborative Project Delivery**

Wednesday, April 22, 2026; 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET; webinar

Collaborative delivery is the fastest-growing project delivery method in the water sector. This webinar will cover the basics of collaborative delivery, including the different delivery methods and how to select them, how to set up a project for success, and how to manage risk from the perspectives of utilities, engineers, and contractors. \$75-member, \$120-nonmember. [Register for the webinar: The Essentials of Collaborative Project Delivery](#).

### **Wastewater Treatment Primary Sedimentation and Solids Removal**

Thursday, April 23, 2026; 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. ET; webinar

Join us for a comprehensive overview of primary treatment, the essential solids separation stage in wastewater treatment. This one-hour webinar is designed for wastewater operators, utility board members, and municipal decision-makers seeking to understand how primary sedimentation reduces organic loading and protects downstream biological processes. We'll cover the fundamental principles of gravity settling, typical primary clarifier configurations and equipment, key operational parameters and performance monitoring, and routine maintenance practices. You'll learn how effective primary treatment improves overall plant efficiency and contributes to regulatory compliance. Whether you're new to wastewater operations, managing day-to-day operations or overseeing infrastructure investments, you'll gain practical insights into this crucial treatment stage. [Register for the webinar: Wastewater Treatment Primary Sedimentation and Solids Removal](#).

### **EPA Cybersecurity Webinar: Cybersecurity Procurement Checklist Tool Training**

Wednesday, April 29, 2026; 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET; webinar

EPA's Office of Water Emergency Response and Cybersecurity (OWERC) will demonstrate how to use EPA's Cybersecurity Procurement Evaluation Checklist for Drinking Water and Wastewater Systems to assess and compare cybersecurity-related vendors. [Register for the webinar: Cybersecurity Procurement Checklist Tool Training](#).

### **The Reuse Revolution: What's Happening in Water Reuse Today**

Wednesday, April 29, 2026; 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET; webinar

Adoption of water reuse is accelerating nationwide! Hear from members of AWWA's Water Reuse Committee as they share updates on current activities in reuse. Presenters will discuss topics ranging from planning to operations and from traditional reuse practices to emerging applications such as data centers. \$75-member, \$120-nonmember. [Register for the webinar: The Reuse Revolution: What's Happening in Water Reuse Today](#).

### **Lead and Copper Rule Improvements Funding and Technical Assistance Opportunities**

Thursday, April 30, 2026; 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. ET; webinar

This webinar will provide an overview of LCRI related funding and technical assistance programs including the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund 0% interest Lead Service Line replacement planning

and construction loan program, which is currently offering 40% loan forgiveness on all eligible projects. [Register for the webinar: Lead and Copper Rule Improvements Funding and Technical Assistance Opportunities](#)

### **EPA Cybersecurity Webinar: Building Cyber Resilience Using EPA's Water and Wastewater Cybersecurity Incident Response Plan Template**

Thursday, April 30, 2026; 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET; webinar

EPA invites water sector professionals to learn about its new *Drinking Water and Wastewater Systems Cybersecurity Incident Response Plan Template*. This fully customizable template is designed to help all utilities prepare for, respond to, and recover from cybersecurity incidents affecting both information technology (IT) and operational technology (OT) systems. This webinar will introduce EPA's Incident Response Plan Template and accompanying instructions including how utility personnel can access, tailor, and operationalize the plan to meet system-specific needs. [Register for the webinar: Building Cyber Resilience Using EPA's Water and Wastewater Cybersecurity Incident Response Plan Template](#).

### **Introduction to Water Distribution System Modeling (Part 1)**

Thursday, April 30, 2026; 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET; webinar

Water distribution system (WDS) hydraulic models are tools often used by engineers to perform complex hydraulic calculations during the design phase of a project. However, these models may also be used by system staff to improve knowledge and operations of their system, aid knowledge transfer, analyze system vulnerabilities, plan for future development, and troubleshoot problems in emergency scenarios. This webinar covers introductory topics related to WDS hydraulic modeling including what a hydraulic model is and why it is useful, how the model works, and an overview of model development. [Register for the webinar: Introduction to Water Distribution System Modeling \(Part 1\)](#).

### **EPA Cybersecurity Webinar: Water Cybersecurity Assessment Tool (WCAT) Webinar**

Wednesday, May 13, 2026; 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET; webinar

EPA's Office of Water Emergency Response and Cybersecurity (OWERC) will demonstrate how to use EPA's Water Cybersecurity Assessment Tool (WCAT) to conduct cybersecurity assessments at water and wastewater systems. [Register for the webinar: Water Cybersecurity Assessment Tool \(WCAT\) Webinar](#).

### **How Water Sector Utilities are Building Resilience to Natural Hazards: Utilities Recount their Engagement with EPA SWIFT Technical Assistance**

Wednesday, May 20, 2026; 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. ET; webinar

SWIFT technical assistance is tailored to meet the needs of each utility request, from improving the understanding of natural hazard impacts to their system to quantifying the potential reductions in risk that specific projects can deliver. Learn how water sector utilities are benefitting from SWIFT technical assistance. **Hear directly from utility representatives** across the country that have engaged in the process to build system resilience to various natural hazards. [Register for the webinar How Water Sector Utilities are Building Resilience to Natural Hazards: Utilities Recount their Engagement with EPA SWIFT Technical Assistance](#).

## 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](#).

## 8. Cybersecurity, Emergency Preparedness, and You!

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

**In light of recent increases in cybersecurity threats, particularly those aimed at WWS, it is critical for all systems in the sector to remain vigilant and proactive in protecting their routine operations.**

- Strengthening cybersecurity practices can significantly reduce risk. Key steps include using:
  - strong passwords,
  - implementing multifactor authentication,
  - limiting OT exposure to the public-facing internet,
  - keeping software and firmware updated,
  - replacing all default passwords on OT devices with strong, unique passwords, and
  - monitoring networks for unusual activity.
- Perform a free cybersecurity assessment for your system: MassDEP strongly encourages you to take advantage of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) free cybersecurity assessment program. This great initiative provides a thorough assessment of your system's cybersecurity posture, all virtually for your convenience. It's better the EPA highlights potential attack vectors before a bad actor takes advantage of them. Apply here today: [EPA's Water Sector Cybersecurity Evaluation Program | US EPA](#)
- MassDEP DWP Self-Paced Course on Basic Cybersecurity Measures for Water and Wastewater Systems in Massachusetts (1 TCH). Enroll Here For Free: [Basic Cybersecurity Measures for Water and Wastewater Systems in Massachusetts](#)
- Apply Today: MassDEP DWP Public Water Suppliers Cybersecurity Improvements Grant Program. Apply here: [Public Water Suppliers Cybersecurity Improvements Grant Program | Mass.gov](#) (for additional details check grants and funding section below)

## 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](#).

## Important Reminder: 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 [MassDEP's Letter on Sanitary Survey Cybersecurity Program/Assessment Report Inspection](#)

## 9. Supply Chain Reminders

If your PWS experiences any supply chain issues, including the receipt of a Force Majeure letter from a chemical supplier, the MassDEP/DWP encourages you to report all supply chain issues to your MassDEP regional office Drinking Water Program contact and take the following steps:

- Review your PWS Emergency Response Plans (ERP) required by 310 CMR 22.04(13) and take planned actions identified for such an emergency. This should include any applicable work and conservation practices to extend the currently available supply.
- 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.
- Check/Use [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.
- Join [MassWARN](#).

## 10. How To Subscribe to the In The Main Newsletter

[Subscribe to the In The Main Newsletter here!](#)

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*, subscribe by completing the quick [ITM Newsletter Sign-Up Form](#). 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](#).

## 11. Drinking Water Trivia! Answer

Answer: A

Jackson's Spa first bottled and sold water in Boston in 1767.