



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

In the Main Newsletter – 07/14/2026

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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.



Mulpus Brook, Shirley, Photo by Grace Ronca

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1. Apply Today: Grant Program Available for Service Line Identification!

Easy application, direct grant funds of up to \$50,000 for unknown service line identification

MassDEP and the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust have partnered with the Massachusetts Federal Funds and Infrastructure Office (FFIO) to support communities and PWS with identifying drinking water service lines of unknown material through FFIO's **Municipal and Tribal Technical Assistance Grant Program (MTTA)**.

MTTA provides technical assistance dollars to local governments or federally recognized tribes that are seeking federal funding and/or who have received federal funding for infrastructure projects.

Importantly, MTTA offers direct, upfront grant money, not reimbursement! Learn more about the program at the [FFIO Technical Assistance Programs webpage](#).

Through this partnership, the MTTA program is offering competitive **grants of up to \$50,000 per community** to support PWS in advancing service line inventory work and related investigative activities. These grants are intended to help communities undertake targeted invasive techniques (e.g. potholing) needed to:

- Identify unknown service line materials;
- Strengthen compliance with forthcoming federal requirements under EPA's Lead and Copper Rule Improvements; and
- Improve potential access to future State Revolving Fund (SRF) financing (which is sourced with federal funds) for the replacement of lead service lines.

To apply, complete the short [MTTA Grant Program Application Form](#).

All PWS are strongly encouraged to apply for this opportunity while funding is available. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

If you are interested in applying or would like to discuss the application process further, please reach out to Raffi Freedman-Gurspan, Associate Director, FFIO at Raffi.M.Freedman-Gurspan@mass.gov.

2. New TCH Opportunity! Basic Math for Water Operators in Massachusetts with WaterOperator.Org

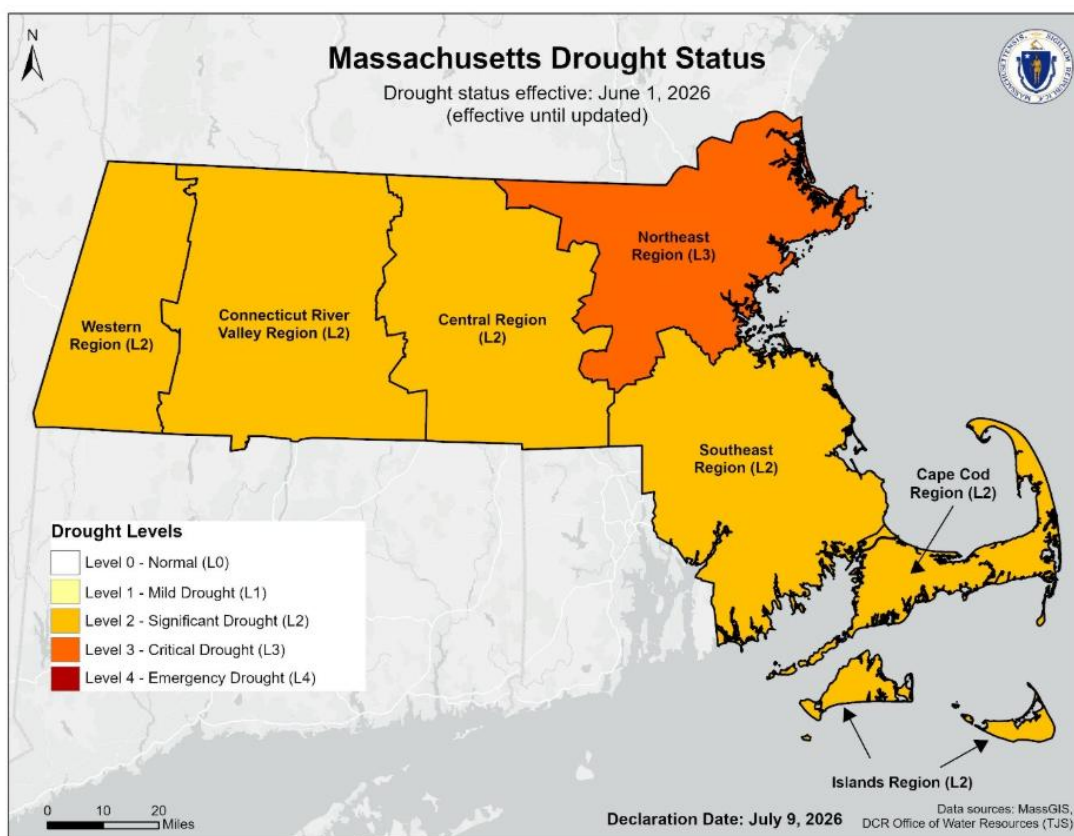
MassDEP/DWP, in partnership with UMass Amherst and the University of Illinois, has finalized a new, free, self-paced training called *Basic Math for Water Operators in Massachusetts*. This introductory self-paced course on math for water operators addresses the critical role that calculation skills play in

operating water systems safely and in passing the operator certification exams. Participants will learn math principles including order of operations, working with fractions and decimals, unit conversions, and selecting and using formulas, as well as how to apply those skills to real problems like calculating water volume and flow rate. This course builds confidence and competence in the math that operators use every day. The training is approved by the Drinking Water Board for 1.0 Training Contact Hour (TCH).

The training is now available online at WaterOperator.Org: [Basic Math For Drinking Water Operators in Massachusetts](#)

3. Drought Conditions Worsen in the Western Region

On July 9, 2026, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) declared a Level 2 – Critical Drought for the Western Region. While much of the state received much-needed rainfall this week resulting in temporary increases in streamflow, Massachusetts continues to experience the effects of two years of below-average precipitation. All other regions remain at the drought levels announced on June 9, 2026. 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.

4. What Classifies as a Transient Non-Community (TNC) Public Water System in Massachusetts?

A **Transient Non-Community Public Water System**, commonly called a **TNC PWS**, is a water system that provides water for human consumption to the public but does not primarily serve year-round residents or the same group of people on a regular, long-term basis.

In Massachusetts, a water system generally becomes a **Public Water System** when it provides water through pipes or another constructed conveyance and:

- Has at least **15 service connections**;
- Or regularly serves an average of at least **25 people per day for at least 60 days per year**. ([Water System Determination](#))

To be classified specifically as a **TNC**, the system must not qualify as a community water system or a non-transient non-community system. In practical terms, it generally serves different people throughout the year rather than at least 25 of the same individuals for more than six months.

Common examples include restaurants, motels, campgrounds, parks, golf courses, ski areas, seasonal attractions, and community centers that obtain water from their own well or another independent water source. Event venues, and agritourism businesses may also qualify when it meets the population and operating-day thresholds.

“Human consumption” is broader than simply drinking the water. It can include water used for cooking, food preparation, dishwashing, bathing, oral hygiene, and similar uses. Facilities that provide bathrooms or handwashing stations for customers may become a PWS because these activities also count as

“human consumption”. Additionally, a system does not need to be publicly owned to be considered a Public Water System; privately owned businesses and facilities may qualify.

Facilities that may meet these criteria should contact the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection’s Drinking Water Program to determine whether registration, permitting, water-quality monitoring, and certified-operator requirements apply. As always if you have any questions, please reach us at program.director-dwp@mass.gov.

5. LCR, LCRR, and LCRI Updates

Service Line Inventory (SLI) Consumer Notice (CN) Certification Forms were due by July 1st!

Thank you to all systems which submitted their SLI CN Certification Forms by midnight, July 1st! MassDEP had a submission compliance rate of 97%. Of our 223 systems which had lead, GRR, and/or unknown service lines, only 7 did not submit the certification form by the LCRR deadline.

Remember to send out your 2026 Service Line Inventory (SLI) Consumer Notices (CNs) this year!

This is a reminder to systems that if your PWS has lead, Galvanized Requiring Replacement (GRR), and/or unknown service lines in your SLI, you must send out SLI CNs annually. This is a recurring requirement under the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR).

If your system has identified any unknowns, or replaced any lead/GRR service lines, your PWS is encouraged to submit an updated SLI before distributing your consumer notices, so when your system certified the CN distribution next year, MassDEP has an accurate, updated SLI on file to compare your certification form to.

2026 SLI CNs must be distributed by December 31, 2026! Lead, GRR, and Unknown Consumer Notification (CN) templates are available on the [Lead and Copper Forms and Templates webpage](#).

6. Water Smart

Water-Smart Program Update

The Water-Smart program continues offering free analysis of lead drinking water samples and technical assistance to eligible public and private schools and early education and childcare facilities (EECFs). Currently, 1,349 schools and EECFs are participating in the program and 1,177 (87%) of participating facilities are within economically disadvantaged communities. To date, 1,245 schools and EECFs have completed testing. Of facilities that have tested and received results, 820 (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

MassDEP continues inviting all Community PWS to the *Water-Smart Pilot Program for PWS* – a forward-thinking initiative designed to help water systems stay ahead of upcoming federal regulations.

Participating in the Pilot Program allows PWS to get ahead on their November 1, 2027 [LCRI Testing Offering Requirements](#) by leveraging the pre-existing Water-Smart Program. The Pilot Program:

- Offers valuable free lead testing to schools and childcare centers now,
- Fulfills 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 with the subject line: “Pilot Program for PWS.”

7. 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 Massachusetts' largest drinking water treatment plant?

- A. Lawrence Water Treatment Facility
- B. Blackstone Water Treatment Facility
- C. Charles River Water Treatment Plant
- D. John J. Carrol Water Treatment Plant

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.

8. Training Calendar

When you need training, please look at the [MassDEP Training Calendar for Public Water System Operators](#) or refer to the resources on the webpage [Drinking Water Training](#).

[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

EPA: Remote Sensing and Geographic Imagery Tools for Emergency Response

Wednesday, July 15, 2026; 1:00 – 2:00 pm ET; webinar

EPA's Environmental Photographic Interpretation Center (EPIC) traces its origin to the early years of the Agency, when analog aerial photography and film-based interpretation were used to support enforcement and environmental investigations. Originally focused on photo interpretation for cases involving hazardous waste, Superfund, and wetlands compliance, EPIC evolved with the emergence of digital remote sensing, GIS, and enterprise geospatial tools. Over the decades, the center has expanded its capabilities from traditional aerial imagery to include multispectral and hyperspectral satellite data, Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR), Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR), utilizing geospatial intelligence tradecraft to reconstruct site histories, detect environmental change, and guide field actions. EPIC has supported numerous high-profile responses and program initiatives—from spill and disaster assessments to long-term remediation monitoring—while partnering with other federal agencies and advancing methods such as GeoAI to meet modern operational needs. This webinar will provide an overview of how EPIC integrates science-based geospatial intelligence for emergency response and provide examples of how its technologies can be used for emergency response situations. [Register for the webinar: Remote Sensing and Geographic Imagery Tools for Emergency Response](#)

AWWA: Water Project Permits: Virtual Roundtable

Wednesday, July 15, 2026; 1:00 – 2:30 pm ET; webinar

This interactive dialogue with leaders from water utility, legal, and the consulting sectors will take a closer look at key aspects and strategies for successfully managing the challenges in navigating federal permitting and review processes for water utility projects. As water utility leaders know, large capital projects often trigger federal environmental review requirements, either because they require a federal permit or because they might receive federal funding. In addition, requirements have shifted significantly due to Supreme Court decisions, regulatory overhauls, executive orders, and more. This program will provide attendees with up-to-date information from experts on permitting aspects of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Clean Water Act (CWA), and more. Practitioners will share how they've overcome the risks and challenges of permitting to deliver essential infrastructure projects. \$75-member, \$120-nonmember. [Register for the webinar: Water Project Permits: Virtual Roundtable](#)

EFCN: Quarterly GI Webinar Series: Source Water Protection and Floodplain Reconnection: Watershed-Scale Green Infrastructure

Thursday, July 16, 2026; 12:00 – 1:15 pm ET; webinar

This webinar will cover Source Water Protection, Floodplain Reconnection, and Watershed Planning, and as methods for improving and protecting water quality. Source water protection involves a set of actions aimed at preserving the quality or quantity of a water body, such as an aquifer, river, or reservoir. Floodplain Reconnection refers to the use of historic flood regimes to determine how and where to direct riparian restoration efforts. To effectively implement these larger-scale forms of green infrastructure, larger-scale planning is often required. Watershed Planning encompasses managerial practices implemented by stakeholders across an entire watershed to safeguard and enhance water quality within that watershed. This webinar, featuring the work of two experts in New Mexico, will conclude the Green Infrastructure Webinar Series by zooming out for a big-picture look at support of natural systems as

essential to long-term water security. [Register for the webinar: EFCN: Quarterly GI Webinar Series: Source Water Protection and Floodplain Reconnection: Watershed-Scale Green Infrastructure](#)

AWWA: Designing Affordability Programs with Readily Available Operating Metrics

Wednesday, July 22, 2026; 1:00 – 2:30 pm ET; webinar

The webinar builds on an AWWA Journal article that demonstrates how utilities can utilize existing operating information to inform the development, tracking, and refinement of programs for low-income customers. Presenters will discuss examples of how utilities are proactively using these metrics.

\$75-member, \$120-nonmember. [Register for the webinar: Designing Affordability Programs with Readily Available Operating Metrics](#)

EFCN: Cybersecurity for Water and Wastewater Operators in Massachusetts

Thursday, July 23, 2026; 1:00 – 4:00 pm ET; webinar

In an era of increasing cyber threats targeting critical infrastructure, utility workers, leaders, board members, and council members must be equipped with the knowledge and tools to protect their systems and communities. Participants will be introduced to the evolving landscape of cybersecurity threats, including common attack methods such as phishing, ransomware, and social engineering, as well as the vulnerabilities that make utility systems attractive targets. The workshop will also address the often-overlooked physical security components of cybersecurity, exploring how physical access points can serve as entry vectors for cyber threats. In addition to foundational cybersecurity concepts, this workshop will include a review of applicable water safety and security legislation, helping participants understand their regulatory obligations and the legal framework surrounding critical infrastructure protection. A highlight of the event will be an interactive tabletop exercise, bringing together participants in a collaborative, scenario-based discussion designed to test and evaluate their organization's current cyber-resilience. [Register for the webinar: Cybersecurity for Water and Wastewater Operators in Massachusetts](#)

9. Cybersecurity, Emergency Preparedness, and You!

For information and alerts see [Cybersecurity Resource Hub for MA Public Water Systems \(PWS\)](#)



Biweekly Spotlight

Top Cyber Actions for Securing Water Systems

The CISA, EPA, and FBI Joint Fact Sheet from early 2024 offers valuable guidelines that are still highly relevant for protecting both operational technology (OT) and information technology (IT) networks. This fact sheet highlights the following top cyber actions water systems can take today to reduce cyber risk and improve resilience to cyberattacks.

- Reduce Exposure to the Public-Facing Internet
- Conduct Regular Cybersecurity Assessments
- Change Default Passwords Immediately
- Conduct an Inventory of Operational Technology/Information Technology Assets
- Develop and Exercise Cybersecurity Incident Response and Recovery Plans

- Backup OT/IT Systems
- Reduce Exposure to Vulnerabilities
- Conduct Cybersecurity Awareness Training

PWS are strongly encouraged to review this fact sheet as a practical guide to promptly assess your PWS cyber hygiene and implement the suggested actions accordingly. **Access/Download the fact sheet:** [Top Cyber Actions for Securing Water Systems](#)

Resources

- Free EPA **Cybersecurity assessment**/evaluation program: [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](#)
- **Grants and Fundings:** The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, in partnership with the MassDEP DWP, is offering grant funds of up to \$50,000 to small and disadvantaged community PWS. The goal of this grant is to support PWSs in improving their cybersecurity defense, mitigating the risks of cyber-attacks, and enhancing overall resiliency and compliance. Details: [Public Water Suppliers Cybersecurity Improvements Grant Program | Mass.gov](#).

10. Supply Chain Reminders

Several PWS have reported recent supply chain issues with fluoride. 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](#).

11. 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](#).

12. Drinking Water Trivia! Answer

Answer: D

John J. Carroll Water Treatment Plant is operated by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority and can treat up to 405 million gallons of water per day. The second largest is William A. Brutsch Water Treatment Facility, which treats an average of 7.7 million gallons per day.