



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

In the Main Newsletter – 10/17/2025

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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.



Turners Falls-Gill Bridge, Gill, MA Photo: Eric Cheung

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1. Final Reminder: MassDEP Water Sector Cybersecurity Training -

Final Reminder: 2025 - MassDEP Water Sector Cybersecurity Meeting and Training (October 28, 2025)

October is Cyber Awareness month!

Excellent Opportunity for Water and Wastewater Utility Staff to Learn About Cybersecurity from Peers and Experts

MassDEP/DWP in collaboration with MassCyberCenter is hosting an in-person 2025 - MassDEP Water Sector Cybersecurity Meeting for drinking water and wastewater utilities in Massachusetts. The goal of this meeting is to provide an educational opportunity that fosters sharing experiences and solutions. This cyber event/meeting will feature expert speakers from local and federal organizations and utilities, covering topics such as threat briefings, cyber incidents, and cybersecurity regulations and resources. The program will also include a cyber tabletop exercise - an interactive, scenario-based session designed to help participants practice cybersecurity best practices and strengthen their incident response plans.

What: 2025 - MassDEP Water Sector Cybersecurity Meeting

When: Tuesday, October 28, 2025, 9:00 am – 12:30 pm EDT. (Please plan to arrive a bit early as it takes about 10 minutes to walk from the parking area. Registration opens at 8:30 AM.)

Where: Bridgewater State University (see the attached flyer for parking instructions and more details)
Dana Mohler-Faria Science and Mathematics Center (DMF)
DMF Auditorium, Room 120, Ground Floor
24 Park Avenue
Bridgewater, MA 02325.

Training Contact Hours (TCHs): This Meeting has been approved for 3 TCHs for MA Drinking Water and Wastewater Operators.

Registration: Free (Refreshments will be provided by the MassCyberCenter).

Register Today!! Space is limited for this event and registration is based on a first-come, first-served basis. As soon as the maximum capacity is reached, the registration link will be closed.

Registration link: Please register [HERE](#).

If you have any questions, please reply to this email or contact the Drinking Water Program at program.director-dwp@mass.gov: Subject: 2025 - MassDEP Water Sector Cybersecurity Meeting.

2. Consumer Confidence Reports for TNC and NTNC Systems

Every year, Transient Non-Community (TNC) and Non-Transient Non-Community (NTNC) public water systems must provide customers with an Annual Water Quality Report, also called the Consumer Confidence Report (CCR). To support TNC and NTNC public water systems and their consumers, MassDEP prepares this report for you, based on the drinking water sampling data your system submitted for the previous calendar year.

What You'll Receive

- A concise one-page report, typically released in early July.
- The previous calendar year's sampling results for your system.
- Easy online access through the MassDEP Public Water Supplier Document Search: [Public Water Supplier Document Search | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/public-water-supplier-document-search) (<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/public-water-supplier-document-search>)

To find your TNC or NTNC report:

1. Select your PWS by name or PWS ID number.
2. Click Retrieve Documents.
3. You'll see several items: your Certificate of Registration, Compliance Monitoring Schedule, and for larger systems, LCR Sampling Sites—plus your Water Quality Report.

Your Responsibilities

- Download and print the report.
- Ensure it is signed by both the owner and the certified operator.
- Post it in a conspicuous location for customers, commonly restrooms, water bubblers, or near food permits.
- Tip: Use a plastic sleeve if posted near sinks or water.
- Keep it continually posted and replace it with the updated version each year.

For vending machine operations, consider providing a small stack of reports as take-home handouts. Customers are often curious about the quality of the water they purchase.

Why It Matters

- MassDEP and local permitting boards look for this report during inspections.
- Not posting when discovered will result in a Notice of Noncompliance (NON).
- The best part? MassDEP creates the report for you—your only task is to sign and display it.

In short: Download, sign, post, and stay in compliance.

3. Cross Connection Corner

Have you been paying attention to your connection control program?

Cross-connection incidents are serious and can happen anywhere, often with little warning. In July 2024, an unprotected cross connection at a private property in West Springfield allowed an “oil-like substance” to enter the public water system. The emergency was addressed immediately and efficiently through isolation, flushing, and monitoring thanks to the fast response of the public water supplier (PWS), MassDEP and Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). A do-not-use order was issued by MassDEP who worked with the PWS to determine the extent and source of contamination. The do-not-use order was lifted 48-hours later after the cross connection was remedied and lab results confirmed the water was safe.

[Read more about the incident here.](#)

Every PWS is required under 310 CMR 22.22 to maintain an effective Cross Connection Control Program (CCCP). PWS must maintain current surveys, testing, training, and licenses to ensure ongoing compliance. PWSs are encouraged to provide education and outreach to their communities to help prevent cross-connections.

Look out for future cross connection ITM articles, and if you have any suggestions for topics please email: program.director-dwp@mass.gov, **subject:** Cross Connections

[MassDEP Drinking Water Training Calendar](#)

For upcoming backflow tester recertification and cross-connection workshops.

[MassDEP Cross Connection Certification \(WS 10\)](#)

Certification and recertification applications and fact sheet

[Guidelines for Public Water Systems: Distribution System Piping and Appurtenances](#)

Information and guidelines related to cross connections and cross connection control programs

4. LCR, LCRR, and LCRI Updates

Remember to send out your 2025 Service Line Inventory (SLI) Consumer Notices this year!

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

2025 SLI CNs must be distributed by **December 31, 2025!** Templates are available on the [Lead and Copper Forms and Templates webpage](#), which were updated June 2025.

If your system has identified any unknowns, or replaced any lead/GRR service lines, your PWS is encouraged to submit an updated SLI a few days before distributing your consumer notices, so when your system certified their distribution next year, MassDEP has an accurate, updated SLI to compare your certification form to. This limits the back and forth required to review your certification form, and expedites your form approval.

Compliance Responsibilities for PWS During the Interim LCRR to LCRI Process

Since we are in an interim period, where PWS are operating under 2 different Lead and Copper Regulations, and preparing for a third, we know this can be confusing to PWS who are aiming to be compliant with all state and federal regulations!

See last month's ITM for a full breakdown of PWS responsibilities for each of the 3 current and upcoming lead and copper regulations: [In the Main \(Drinking Water Program Updates\) 09-19-2025](#).

MassDEP/DWP Contacts

For all questions on LCR, LCRR and LCRI, please contact the Drinking Water Program at program.director-dwp@mass.gov.

5. 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).

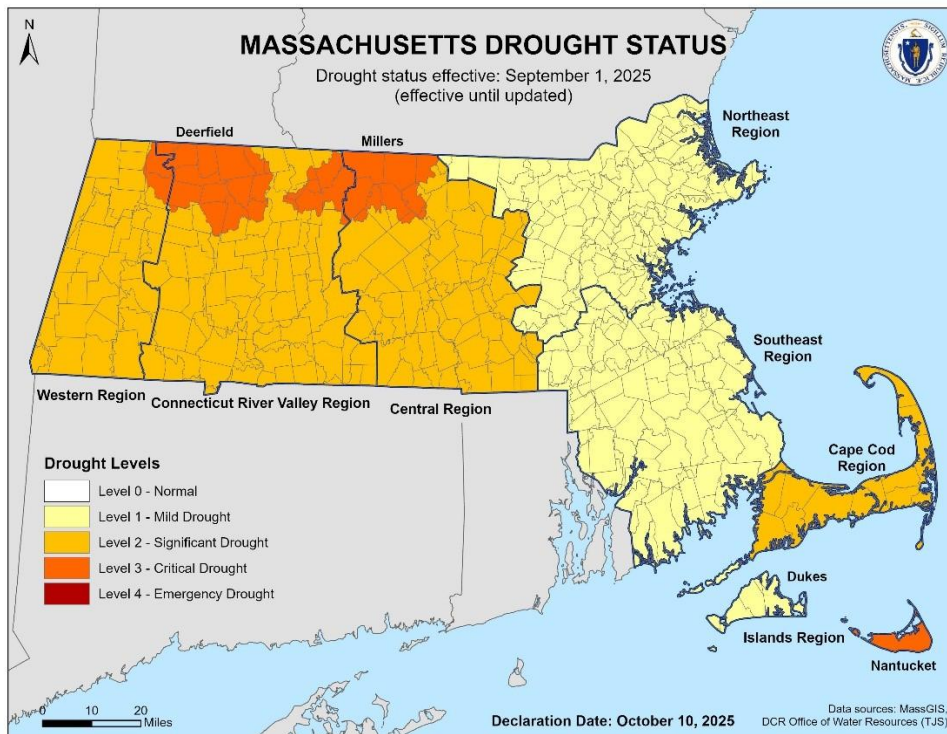
Getting Ready for the LCRI

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 26 PWS are expected to exceed this new threshold.

Please see the latest update at [Results of lead sampling for Public Water Systems | Mass.gov](#) 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, subject: LCRI to be connected with one of our technical assistance providers for support.

6. Critical Drought Conditions Declared in Several Regions

On October 10, 2025, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) declared Level 3 – Critical Drought in Nantucket County and Level 1 – Mild Drought in Dukes County, both in the Islands Region. EEA also declared Level 3 – Critical Drought in the Deerfield and Millers Watersheds. The Southeast Region remains at a Level 1 – Mild Drought, and the Western, Connecticut River Valley, Central, and Cape Cod Regions remain at a Level 2 – Significant Drought. The Northeast Region has improved from a Level 2 – Significant Drought to a Level 1 – Mild Drought.



Level 1 (“Mild Drought”), Level 2 (“Significant Drought”), and Level 3 (“Critical Drought”) 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 Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 droughts 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.

7. New Grant Opportunity: Drought Resiliency and Water Efficiency Grants!

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) announced a new funding opportunity for Drought Resiliency and Water Efficiency projects. The program will fund projects that help communities and Public Water Systems reduce indoor and outdoor water use and enhance water loss control programs. Eligible project types include, but are not limited to, water loss control program development and implementation; water conservation/efficiency program development; outdoor water use efficiency improvements; and drought management planning and local drought plan development. Grant awardees may obtain up to \$50,000 per project.

The deadline to apply for this opportunity is **November 21, 2025**. Detailed information, including the application instructions and deadlines, is posted on [COMMBUYS \(Bid Number BD-26-1042-ENV-ENV01-121785\)](#).

For more information on the current drought conditions, technical guidance regarding drought management actions and for drought-related tools and outreach materials, please visit the [Drought Management webpage](#) and/or the [Water Conservation webpage](#).

8. Changes to Drinking Water Operator Licensing Regulations Published by Secretary of State

On October 10, 2025, the Secretary of State published final regulation changes to the Drinking Water Operator Licensing Regulations ([236 CMR 4](#)). These regulation changes are part of a larger initiative by the Governor to make amendments to licensing regulations to remove unnecessary barriers to licensure across several of the Massachusetts licensing boards.

The amendments to the Drinking Water Operator Licensing regulations consist of the following changes:

1. The timeline to apply for licensure after passing an exam has been changed from a six-month deadline to “a time after the date of notification of passing the examination to be determined by the Board by written Policy.” (236 CMR 4.04(1))
 - a. The Board passed a policy extending the exam deadline to one year ([Policy on Time Limit for Exam Scores](#))
2. The review of reciprocity applications has been changed to focus on the applicant’s individual qualifications compared to Massachusetts’s regulations, rather than determining whether the

state where the applicant is coming from has equivalent requirements to Massachusetts. (236 CMR 4.05(5))

3. The requirements for operators who renew their license(s) late have been clarified/modified in the following ways. (236 CMR 4.07(2))
 - a. Applicants who renew their license(s) late will need to provide verification that they have completed their renewal training contact hours (TCHs) for one license cycle (the original regulations did not specify how many license cycles of TCHs were required).
 - b. Applicants who do not renew their license within two years of their license expiring may be required to retake an examination, rather than be required to retake an examination.
4. The requirements for operators who are reinstating an expired license have been changed to require applicants to provide verification that they have completed their TCHs for one license cycle, rather than TCHs for every license cycle since the license expired. (236 CMR 4.07(5))
5. A new paragraph was included to explicitly allow the Drinking Water Licensing Board to waive any requirement of 236 CMR 4.00 in exceptional circumstances. (236 CMR 4.08)

If you have any questions, please reach out to the Drinking Water Board at drinkingwaterboard@mass.gov or to the Drinking Water Program at program.director-dwp@mass.gov, Subject: DW Licensing.

9. Water Smart

Water-Smart Program Update

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

Currently, 1,168 schools and EECFs are participating in the program and 1,034 (89%) of participating facilities are within economically disadvantaged communities. To date, 1,087 schools and EECFs have completed testing. Of facilities that have tested and received results, 720 (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: <https://tinyurl.com/Water-SmartProgram>.

Nine New Public Water Systems Have Joined Water-Smart Pilot Program

Following the September 23rd Water-Smart Pilot Program for Public Water Systems (PWS), nine new PWS have enrolled. The Pilot Program is designed to help Public Water Systems prepare for the upcoming Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) testing requirements prior to the November 1, 2027 deadline.

Additional webinars will be held in the coming months to provide more opportunities for systems to learn and ask questions about the Pilot Program. If your system is interested in joining, read the excerpt below to learn more.

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**, all PWS will be **required to offer** lead testing to schools and childcare facilities that were built or have not had plumbing replacements since 2014 under the federal Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI). Rather than wait, the *Pilot Program* gives PWS a head start—leveraging the well-established **Water-Smart Program**, which has already tested over 1,000 schools and childcare facilities across the Commonwealth.

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

Participating in the Pilot Program allows PWS to:

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

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

Outreach to Facilities with Lead Detections Above the Action Level on Actions Taken: A Worcester Polytechnic Institute Student Interns Study

Massachusetts has been offering schools and childcare facilities free lead testing in their drinking water since 2016. The Water-Smart Program (formerly the Expanded Assistance Program), not only tests for lead, but provides the results and recommended solutions for elevated lead levels. Technical Assistance Providers follow up with childcare facilities and schools to guide them on what can be done to reduce lead exposure. These remediation measures can range from installing filters to replacing plumbing fixtures.

MassDEP strives for transparency when it comes to Water-Smart's progress by making all testing results publicly available on the EEA Data Portal [Energy & Environmental Affairs Data Portal](#). However, MassDEP identified some gaps in the data for remediation actions taken by facilities. To this end, MassDEP partnered with Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) through its [Boston Project Center](#) to reach out to schools and childcare facilities and inquire about the remediation actions that have been taken. WPI student interns reached out to 88 facilities using emails and phone calls.

Outreach results found that childcare facilities were more responsive and emails were a more effective means of communication. Facilities reported that they tended to go with the remediation action that was

the simplest to implement, with installing a filter or posting a ‘do not drink’ sign being the most common, while replacing a fixture was done the least.

Some barriers and limitations to the outreach process were identified. The project schedule only allowed for 3 days to wait for responses. 23% of phone responses were from Spanish speaking providers. The students recommend that the outreach process be streamlined and include more Spanish speaking technical assistance providers.

MassDEP would like to thank the WPI student interns; Maysa Fateh, Michael James, Bryan Pena, Andrew Rice, and Mary Tomaszewski and their Professors: Caitlin Ferrarini and Courtney Kurlanska, for all their work on the project. Not only will their insights help streamline the Water-Smart program’s future efforts, but their findings will also help improve how Massachusetts works with schools and childcare facilities when implementing aspects of the Lead and Copper rule.

For more information on the WPI project please email Program.Director-DWP@mass.gov with the subject line: **“WPI facilities with lead detections”**



Jessica Sibirski (MassDEP), Brycen Pina (WPI student), Maysa Fateh (WPI student), Mary Tomaszewski (WPI student), Michael James (WPI student), Xochitl Perez (MassDEP), Justin Chin (MassDEP)

Not pictured: Andrew Rice (WPI student)

10. PFAS Update

Construction Projects in Massachusetts

79 new water treatment facilities (WTFs) or additions to existing WTFs have been constructed and activated by Public Water Suppliers since 2020 (temporary and permanent systems). See Tab 6 on the [PFAS storymap](#) for details. The storymap also shows treatment facilities currently under construction using Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (DWSRF) financing; there are 33 treatment facilities under construction.

MassDEP and the Clean Water Trust have issued 65 DWSRF loans totaling over \$700 million at a 0% interest rate for construction projects that address PFAS contamination in drinking water; see the list of loans on the Trust's webpage: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/pfas-mitigation-loans-0-interest>

The MassDEP Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grant Program has also issued grants totaling over \$38 million to 39 communities to address PFAS contamination of drinking water. Details are available here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/emerging-contaminants-in-small-or-disadvantaged-communities-grant>

11. Drinking Water Trivia!

How can a nor'easter affect drinking water?

- A. Contaminate water supplies
- B. Disrupt water delivery systems
- C. Reduce water consumption rate
- D. Alter water temperature

12. Training Calendar

When you need training, please look at the [MassDEP Training Calendar for Public Water System Operators](#).

Board of Certification Training Page and List of Approved Courses

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

Some Newly Added Trainings on the Calendar

Ask Me Anything! State Revolving Fund (SRF) Technical Assistance & Open Office Hours: What is this thing called Equivalency?

Monday, October 20, 2025; 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. ET; webinar

Ask Me Anything SRF Office Hours will expand your knowledge and enhance your ability to navigate the SRFs. These sessions are tailored for state agencies, utility operators, and stakeholders who support water infrastructure projects. Each session will feature a specific theme, providing clarity, strategies, and practical insights for preparing and managing an SRF funded project. Participants can attend all sessions or select those that best meet their needs. Submit your questions in advance or bring them to the session for real-time support from our experts.

[Register for Ask Me Anything! State Revolving Fund \(SRF\) Technical Assistance & Open Office Hours: What is this thing called Equivalency?](#)

Funding Strategies for Capital Programs

Tuesday, October 21, 2025; 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET; webinar

This interactive virtual roundtable brings together leading experts from the water utility, financial, and ratings sectors. The panel will share insights and experiences in developing and implementing strategies that produce successful capital programs for water utilities. Discussion topics will include such current and evolving subjects as: various private and municipal financing tools available for capital programs; customer affordability and water utility rate structures; the setting of capital program priorities; multi-year planning and forecasting; the evolving use of Green Bonds and sustainable finance; and the current and evolving federal programs water utilities and the sector can use to meet their capital planning needs. \$75-member, \$120-nonmember

[Register for Funding Strategies for Capital Programs](#)

Understanding Inflow and Infiltration: Causes, Impacts, and Solutions - Part 1

Tuesday, October 21, 2025; 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. ET; webinar

Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) – which occurs when stormwater and groundwater enter the sewage collection system – poses a wide array of challenges for wastewater utilities, from overwhelmed wastewater treatment plants to basement back-ups. This webinar, featuring Moonshot Mission's recently released Inflow and Infiltration Guidance Document, will provide an overview of the causes of I&I, describe its impacts on stormwater and wastewater management, and share approaches that communities can use to understand and address inflow and infiltration challenges in their own systems.

[Register for Understanding Inflow and Infiltration: Causes, Impacts, and Solutions - Part 1](#)

Implementing Reliability Maintenance Programs to Optimize O&M

Wednesday, October 22, 2025; 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET; webinar

Learn key strategies and steps you can take to implement and sustain a successful reliability program from any stage of your reliability journey. This session includes a high-level overview of maintenance reliability; the journey and lessons learned from three utilities successfully implementing reliability maintenance projects; tips for developing strategies to sustain and improve asset reliability; and a panel discussion with audience engagement.

[Register for Implementing Reliability Maintenance Programs to Optimize O&M](#)

Peer Learning Session-Solar for Small Systems

Wednesday, October 22, 2025; 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. ET; webinar

Join us for an interactive peer learning and discussion session on bringing solar to small wastewater systems. Hear from experts and communities that have implemented solar at treatment plants and lagoons, gain insights into the national landscape of solar adoption in the sector, and explore practical case studies. This session also provides space to share your own experiences, ask questions, and discuss what it really takes to make solar projects work at smaller facilities.

If you have any questions - please reach out to: Danish Kumar: dkumar18@umd.edu

[Register for Peer Learning Session-Solar for Small Systems](#)

Flow Monitoring Without a Hitch

Thursday, October 23, 2025; 11:00 – 12:00 p.m. ET; webinar

Water utilities across the country are under pressure to reduce non-revenue water, detect leaks faster, and improve visibility across aging distribution systems without costly shutdowns or disruptive retrofits. Join the City of Clarksville, Tennessee, along with Flow-Tronic and Rye Engineering, in this webinar as they share proven strategies for smarter flow monitoring—helping to reduce water loss, support audit compliance, and modernize their distribution network. At the center of their strategy is advanced flow metering technology that allows for live installation in pressurized systems and accurate flow data collection across District Metered Areas (DMAs).

[Register for Flow Monitoring Without a Hitch](#)

EFCN: Advancing Watershed Health: How Partnerships and Planning Can Strengthen Local Water Quality

Thursday, October 23, 2025; 11:00 – 12:00 p.m. ET; webinar

This webinar will explore how collaboration and adaptive strategies can drive long-term watershed success. This webinar will provide key takeaways and lessons learned from over 15 years of coordinated watershed management under the Black River Initiative. With notable water quality improvements, this effort showcases how sustained partnerships, data-driven strategies, and locally led implementation can deliver measurable results. This webinar will highlight the value of monitoring nutrients, sediment, and phosphorus loading, and how Nine Element (9E) Watershed Plans helped support these efforts. Attendees will explore how professionals can engage with 9E plans and how these planning tools complement long-term watershed management goals and help sustain local water resources.

[Register for the EFCN: Advancing Watershed Health: How Partnerships and Planning Can Strengthen Local Water Quality Training.](#)

Lift Station Operation and Maintenance

Tuesday, October 28, 2025; 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. ET; webinar

This 1-hour webinar covers operation, maintenance, and inspection tasks for wastewater lift stations. Attendees will achieve the following learning objectives:

- Discuss maintenance and inspection tasks for wastewater lift stations
- Describe the main components of lift stations
- Explain how lift station control systems function
- Evaluate pumps and motors used in lift stations
- Apply safety principles related to lift station O&M

Join us for an hour of practical tips and expert guidance to keep your lift stations running safely and efficiently. Presenters: Gregory Pearson, Water & Wastewater Trainer, Great Lakes Environmental Infrastructure Center [Register for the webinar: Lift Station Operation and Maintenance](#)

EPA: Local and State Mutual Aid for the Water Sector

Wednesday, October 29, 2025; 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. ET; webinar

The U.S. EPA is hosting a no-cost webinar for water sector utilities and their response partners. During large emergencies that impact water and wastewater utilities, knowing the local and state mutual aid options can be critical to a successful response. Early planning and coordination across states is vital to ensure water sector resilience during regional disasters since water and wastewater utilities may be called upon to support response and recovery efforts beyond their state borders. This session will highlight how Water and Wastewater Agency Response Networks (WARNs) and the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) work to provide mutual aid to the water sector at the local and state levels, and how collaboration across agencies helps ensure continuity of essential water services. This webinar will provide WARN information, an EMAC overview targeted for the water sector, and insights and lessons learned from state agencies and utilities on strategies to streamline assistance. [Register for the webinar: EPA Local and State Mutual Aid for the Water Sector](#)

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](#)

- **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](#).

13. 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

Chinese State-Sponsored Threat Actors Exploit ArcGIS Systems for Persistent Access

A Chinese state-sponsored threat actor known as **Flax Typhoon** has been discovered exploiting ArcGIS systems to establish **persistent, long-term unauthorized access**. The attackers inserted a web shell by modifying a legitimate Java Server Object Extension (SOE) component, enabling covert command execution. This method allowed them to remain undetected for over a year. The incident underscores the risk of “living off the land” techniques, where adversaries repurpose trusted software functions to bypass security defenses. The attack notably targets critical infrastructure sectors including water and wastewater utilities (Source ReliaQuest and WaterISAC).

Read full article at [Reliaquest](#).

CISA Directs Federal Agencies to Mitigate Vulnerabilities in F5 Devices

CISA issued Emergency Directive [ED 26-01: Mitigate Vulnerabilities in F5 Devices](#) to direct Federal Civilian Executive Branch agencies to inventory F5 BIG-IP products, evaluate if the networked management interfaces are accessible from the public internet, and apply newly released updates from F5.

A nation-state affiliated cyber threat actor has compromised F5 systems and exfiltrated data, including portions of the BIG-IP proprietary source code and vulnerability information, which provides the actor with a technical advantage to exploit F5 devices and software. This poses an imminent threat to federal networks using F5 devices and software (Source CISA).

Read full article at [CISA](#).

Cybersecurity Awareness Month – Week 2:

Focus: Stronger Passwords & Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)

Throughout October, MassDEP/DEP will remind all to focus on simple yet powerful actions that all PWS can take to strengthen their cybersecurity posture.

This week’s focus is on **creating stronger passwords** and **enabling Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)** two most effective and basic steps to protect your system:

- **Use Strong Passwords:** Make sure it’s long – at least 15 random characters, and avoid using common or easily guessable passwords, such as simple keyboard patterns or slightly modified words, when creating your passwords. Don't share your password with anyone or use the same or

similar password for multiple accounts: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/cybersecurity-tips-for-public-water-systems-passwords/download>

- **Enable Multi-Factor Authentication:** You need more than a password to protect your online accounts, and enabling MFA makes you significantly less likely to get hacked. [More than a Password | CISA](#)

14. Supply Chain Reminders

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

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.

15. How To Subscribe to the In The Main Newsletter

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

MassDEP is sending this important drinking water information to all PWS responsible persons who are listed on the state database. If you are no longer the correct responsible person for the PWS please reply with the correct contact information. MassDEP needs one responsible contact person from each PWS. Operators, consultants, and others who are interested in Drinking Water Program updates are encouraged to request to be subscribed to this email list. To subscribe to the *In The Main Newsletter*, send a blank email to join-dep-dwp-subscribers@listserv.state.ma.us. This MassDEP Program Director technical assistance email is funded by the Safe Drinking Water Act Assessment (Section 70) Program. The Assessment is paid by all consumers of public water in Massachusetts and is collected by public water systems. For more information about the Assessment Program, visit to the [Safe Drinking Water Act Assessment Advisory Committee \("Section 70" Committee\) Homepage](#).

16. Drinking Water Trivia! Answer

Answer:

- A. Can introduce bacteria or other contaminants into water supply
- B. Power outages can shut down systems