



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

In the Main Newsletter – 10/31/2025

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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.



Quaker Cemetery Gates Removed, Leicester. Photo by: [Cucumberchester](#)

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

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1. The 2025 Mercury Questionnaire will be released on Monday (November 3rd), Next Week!

PWS are being notified that on Monday, November 3, next week, MassDEP/DWP will be sending out the 2025 Mercury Questionnaire. MassDEP/DWP began sending the Mercury questionnaire out in 2007 and has since repeated the survey request on a 5-year schedule (2013 and 2019). This survey documents the extent of the use of mercury-containing products at PWSs. Mercury use is a concern in drinking water due to its toxicity and associated health risks, environmental impacts, and the high cost of cleanup from spills. The results from this survey are used to develop tools to assist PWS as they work toward the reduction of mercury-containing products.

The Mercury questionnaire is available as an online form. Want to get ahead and start your survey before Monday? The survey can be accessed and completed here: [MassDEP DWP 2025 Public Water System \(PWS\) Mercury Questionnaire](#). **Please remember to complete this survey by December 1st, 2025.**

To see the 2019 survey, check out the Survey section of the [Drinking Water Permits, Forms, and Templates webpage](#). For more information on mercury, check out the [MassDEP Mercury Information website](#).

2. Resource Guide for New Drinking Water Operators

MassDEP/DWP recently published a resource guide for individuals who are new to Drinking Water Operations in Massachusetts. The guide includes an introduction to the drinking water industry, a background on drinking water operator licensing in Massachusetts, and an overview of the examination and licensing process to obtain a drinking water license. The resource guide is available on the MassDEP [Public Water System Capacity website](#) under “Certified Drinking Water Operators.” [Read the Resources for New Drinking Water Operators guide](#).

3. *New* Well Driller Reciprocity Questionnaire

Please note that MassDEP has published a new Massachusetts Certified Well Driller (CWD) Application form on its website, known as the [Well Driller Reciprocity Questionnaire](#). This form is for individuals who are applying for initial MA Well Driller Certification if they are using their licensure in another state to apply via reciprocity. Applicants should complete Section A of the form and then submit it to the well driller licensing agency in the state in which they are licensed. The questionnaire is intended to expedite application processing.

Well Driller Certification and Well Completion Report Reminders

MassDEP *Well Driller Regulations* (310 CMR 46.00) require that well drilling activities (well installation, deepening, decommissioning, hydrofracturing, etc.) be performed by a MA Certified

Well Driller (CWD). Under 310 CMR 46.02, persons engaged in the business of well drilling must hold a current MassDEP Well Driller Certificate. If a non-certified well driller is performing the work, a CWD must be on site to supervise the drilling process.

In addition to certification requirements, the regulations require that CWDs submit a Well Completion Report (WCR) within 30 days of project completion via the MassDEP online filing system known as [eDEP](#).

For questions about well drilling, well driller certification, or WCRs, please contact the MassDEP Drinking Water Program at Program.Director-DWP@mass.gov Subject: Well Driller Program, or 617-292-5770.

Helpful Resources on MassDEP's Website:

- [MassDEP Well Driller Program Homepage](#)
- [Well Driller Certification Application and List of Certified Well Drillers](#)
- [MassDEP GIS Well Location Viewer](#)
- [Well Driller Database \(via EEA Data Portal\)](#)
- [eDEP Login \(for Well Completion Report submittals\)](#)
- [MassDEP Well Driller Regulations \(310 CMR 46.00\)](#)

4. Updates to *Guidelines Chapter 12 – Emergency Response Planning*

MassDEP/DWP recently made updates to the *Guidelines for Public Water Systems Chapter 12 – Emergency Response Planning* to incorporate emergency response topics such as public notification, interconnections, and distribution system mapping. These topics have been included in previous outreach to Public Water Systems via direct e-mail communications and the *In the Main* newsletter. The revisions also include fixing broken links and other grammatical and formatting changes.

All chapters of the *Guidelines* can be accessed at the [Guidelines for Public Water Systems webpage](#). [Read the revised Chapter 12 of the Guidelines here](#). Please reach out to the Drinking Water Program at program.director-dwp@mass.gov if you would like to obtain a redline version of the document or if you have any questions.

5. Staying Cyber-Safe: Cybersecurity Awareness for Transient Non-Community Public Water Systems

Even small public water systems can be targets of cyberattacks. Transient Non-Community Public Water Systems (TNC PWSs), such as restaurants, schools, campgrounds, and gas stations, often use digital tools to monitor pumps, chemical feed systems, or data reporting. While these technologies may improve efficiency, they also create potential entry points for cyber hackers seeking to disrupt operations and/or steal information. Cyber incidents can cause more than just inconvenience -they can lead to service interruptions, data loss, or safety concerns. Taking simple steps to improve cybersecurity can make a big difference.

Five Practical Steps to Strengthen Cybersecurity

1. Use Strong Passwords and Multi-Factor Authentication

Use long, unique passwords (at least 12 characters) for any system that connects to your water operations or data reporting tools. Enable multi-factor authentication (MFA) whenever possible — this adds an extra layer of protection even if your password is compromised. Avoid sharing passwords among staff.

2. Keep Software and Equipment Updated

Outdated software and control equipment are common targets for attackers. Regularly update your computers, routers, and control software (including SCADA or remote access programs). If your system uses vendor-supplied equipment, check with the vendor for updates or security patches.

3. Limit Remote Access

Only allow remote access when it's absolutely necessary — and restrict it to trusted personnel. If you must have remote access, make sure to enable MFA and ensure it uses secure connections such as VPNs. Disable default usernames and change default passwords immediately after setup.

4. Back Up Important Data

Maintain regular backups of your operational data and store at least one copy offline or in a secure, separate location. Backups can help your system recover quickly in the event of a cyberattack, power outage, or ransomware event.

5. Build a Culture of Awareness

Train all staff — even part-time or seasonal operators — to recognize phishing emails, suspicious links, and social engineering scams. Remind them never to share login information or plug unknown devices into computers used for water system operations.

Additional Tips for TNC PWSs

- Keep an inventory of all equipment that connects to the internet.
- Disable unused ports and devices.
- Use firewalls and antivirus protection on connected computers.
- Post a quick “Cyber Checklist” near system computers as a reminder of good habits.
- Designate one staff member to review cybersecurity practices at least once a year.

Resources

- [EPA Cybersecurity for Water and Wastewater Systems](#)
- [CISA](#) Cyber Hygiene Services: Free vulnerability scanning and resources
- MassDEP Drinking Water Program: For cybersecurity updates, alerts and up to date grant opportunities please visit [Cybersecurity Resource Hub for MA Public Water Systems \(PWS\)](#)
- For technical assistance or questions related to system security and resiliency, contact your regional Drinking Water Program office.

In Short

You don't need to be an IT expert to protect your system. Small, consistent actions- such as keeping software updated and using strong passwords - can go a long way in preventing costly cyber incidents. Protecting your system means protecting your customers, your business, and your community.

6. 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 September'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.

7. 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, 1,176 schools and EECFs are participating in the program and 1,041 (89%) of participating facilities are within economically disadvantaged communities. To date, 1,090 schools and EECFs have completed testing. Of facilities that have tested and received results, 723 (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>.

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.”**

8. 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.

Which of the following are water spirits from mythologies around the world?

- A. Kappa
- B. Kelpie

- C. Naiad
- D. Selkie

What are some superstitions regarding running water?

- A. Spiritual purification
- B. Zombies can't cross it
- C. Symbolic boundary between realms
- D. The faster the current, the angrier a nearby spirit is

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.

9. 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

2025 Intro to Surface Water Treatment Workshop (MA)

Tuesday, November 4 and Wednesday, November 5, 2025; 1:00 – 3:30 pm ET; webinar

This 2-day class provides a comprehensive overview of the surface water treatment process which includes coagulation, flocculation, filtration, sedimentation, and disinfection. Attendees will also be introduced to relevant compliance regulations and essential mathematics and processes for chemical dosing, equipment operation, and process control of surface water treatment plants. The registration deadline for this online event is November 3, 2025. [Register for the webinar: 2025 Intro to Surface Water Treatment Workshop \(MA\)](#)

Water 2050: Strategic Planning for Resilient Water Resources - From Vision to Action

Wednesday, November 5, 2025; 1:00 – 2:30 pm ET; webinar

Learn how Sonoma Water uses strategic planning, community collaboration, and transparent technology to ensure resilient water resources. Discover a replicable, future-ready approach to environmental stewardship, climate adaptation, and public trust. Join us for practical tools and inspiration. Attendees will leave equipped to adopt a living strategic plan, implement performance dashboards, and engage stakeholders meaningfully, ensuring their agencies are not just prepared for the future but are actively shaping it. \$75-member, \$120-nonmember. [Register for the webinar: Water 2050: Strategic Planning for Resilient Water Resources - From Vision to Action](#)

What is a Wastewater System Inspection and What to Expect

Thursday, November 6, 2025; 1:00 – 2:00 pm ET; webinar

This session will cover inspection procedures—including preparation, site visits, records review, and reporting—to help participants stay inspection-ready and avoid common violations. Real-world guidance will highlight the importance of maintaining accurate records, monitoring system conditions, and implementing preventative maintenance practices to support compliance, environmental protection, and community well-being. This webinar will also provide a practical overview of the essential wastewater permit parameters outlined in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Attendees will explore how parameters such as flow, pH, dissolved oxygen, biochemical oxygen demand (BOD), total suspended solids (TSS), nitrogen, phosphorus, fecal coliform, and chlorine residual impact wastewater system performance, stream health, and regulatory compliance. [Register for the webinar: What is a Wastewater System Inspection and What to Expect](#)

Communicating the True Cost of Water

Wednesday, November 12, 2025; 1:00 – 2:30 pm ET; webinar

This webinar will explore strategies utilities can use to explain the “true cost of water” in clear, relatable ways that connect with customers and decision-makers. Presenters include communicators from water utilities, leaders from nonprofit organizations, and experts who manage and share water sector research. Together, they will explore approaches for addressing inflation, making the case for ongoing investment in infrastructure and operations, and communicating about major capital projects. The session will also highlight practical tools for smaller systems getting started with outreach, including lessons from social media studies and findings from public opinion polling on how people understand water issues. \$75-member, \$120-nonmember. [Register for the webinar: Communicating the True Cost of Water](#)

EFCN No-Cost Webinar: Basic Drinking Water Math for Operators

Thursday, November 13, 2025; 1:00 – 2:00 pm ET; webinar

This 1-hour webinar provides an overview of essential math used by drinking water distribution and treatment operators. Through clear examples and real-world applications, participants will strengthen their ability to perform critical calculations which support safe, efficient, and compliant system operations. Attendees will learn how to calculate volume, flow rate, pressure, and dosage using basic water math and conversion factors. [Register for the webinar: Basic Drinking Water Math for Operators](#)

From Paper to Progress: Utility Leaders on Strategic Planning with AWWA's M5 Manual

Thursday, November 13, 2025; 1:00 – 2:30 pm ET; webinar

As water sector agencies, we're accustomed to planning across nearly every facet of operations—from long-term master plans guiding facility and supply decisions decades ahead, to detailed strategies for managing information, assets, and finances. Although we are planners by nature, strategic planning presents a uniquely complex challenge. Unlike operational or technical planning, it centers on priorities, positioning, and long-term direction—not just logistics. This webinar will begin with a review of Chapter 3: Strategic Planning from the AWWA M5 Utility Management Manual, presented by the chapter's lead author. Building on that foundation, a panel of utility executives will share their firsthand experiences, insights, lessons learned, and the value they've gained from using a structured approach to developing and implementing strategic plans within their organizations. \$75-member, \$120-nonmember. [Register for the webinar: From Paper to Progress: Utility Leaders on Strategic Planning with AWWA's M5 Manual](#)

EPA Tools & Resources Webinar: Collaborating with our State Partners on Disaster Resiliency Planning

Wednesday, November 19, 2025; 3:00 – 4:00 pm ET; webinar

EPA entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) in 2016 to collaborate in developing tools, reports, workshops, meetings, communications pathways, and other initiatives that will leverage resources and advance a mutually shared mission of protecting the public's health from environmental threats and hazards and strengthen environmental health systems across the country. This webinar will provide a summary of projects completed to date under the MOA and then provide a deeper dive into the most recent project focusing on state disaster resiliency planning. ASTHO and the ECOS have been partnering to better understand state activities around resiliency planning and implementation. Join the webinar to learn more about this project, including case studies from Vermont and Colorado. [Register for the webinar: Collaborating with our State Partners on Disaster Resiliency Planning.](#)

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](#).

10. 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

2025 MassDEP Water Sector Cybersecurity Meeting - Event Recap



Left to right: Gufran Bulbul, Michael Celona and Christopher Van.



On October 28, 2025, the MassDEP DWP hosted its annual Water Sector Cybersecurity Meeting at Bridgewater State University. This year's event welcomed **50 attendees** from drinking water and wastewater utilities across the Commonwealth.

Thank you to everyone who joined us and contributed to the 2025 Meeting.

The program featured expert presenters representing local and state partners, along with MassDEP DWP cyber team who shared valuable insights on cyber threats, recent incidents, regulatory updates, and available cybersecurity resources.

Attendees also participated in an **interactive tabletop exercise**, working through a realistic cyber scenario to strengthen response planning, communication, and resilience.

We extend our sincere appreciation to our partners: **MassCyberCenter, BSU's Cyber Range, Mass Fusion Center and CyberTrust Massachusetts.**

We value the continued collaboration of our water sector community and look forward to seeing even more utilities at next year's event.

MassDEP DWP hosts this meeting annually and rotates locations to give more water sector staff the opportunity to attend and benefit from peer learning and in-person engagement.

NEW Critical Infrastructure Security Updates

Canada's Cyber Centre Warns of Internet-Accessible ICS Abused by Hacktivists, Water Facility Breach (Source WaterISAC)

The Canadian Centre for Cyber Security (CCCS) issued an alert titled "[Internet-accessible industrial control systems \(ICS\) abused by hackers.](#)" The alert raises awareness of a recently identified cyber threat that may impact cyber information assets and provides additional detection and mitigation advice to recipients. Full article at [WaterISAC](#).



ACTION MAY BE REQUIRED for utilities using Microsoft Windows Server Update Service (WSUS) in Windows Server 2012, 2016, 2019, 2022, and 2025 (Source WaterISAC)

- Microsoft released out-of-band security updates to patch a high-severity Windows Server Update Service (WSUS) vulnerability ([CVE-2025-59287](#)), which has come under active exploitation in the wild.

- CISA issued an [alert](#) urging organizations to implement Microsoft's updated [Windows Server Update Service \(WSUS\) Remote Code Execution Vulnerability](#) guidance.
- PWS utilizing the affected products must take immediate action:
 - 1- Identify servers that are currently configured to be vulnerable.
 - 2- Apply the out-of-band security update released on October 23, 2025, to all servers identified in Step 1.
 - 3- Apply updates to remaining Windows servers.
 - 4- See [CISA](#) and [Microsoft](#) for more comprehensive guidance.



EPA Releases [New Resources](#) to Help Protect Water Systems, Strengthen Cyber Resilience

- 1- [Cybersecurity Procurement Checklist](#)
- 2- [Template for Developing an Incident Response Plan](#)
- 3- [Incident Action Checklists](#)
- 4- [Emergency Response Plan \(ERP\) Guide for Wastewater Utilities](#)

Upcoming Trainings

EPA's [Cybersecurity 102](#) (November 5, 2025)

The technical assistance course will offer deeper insights into cybersecurity for those with basic knowledge in the field, as it applies to Operational Technology (OT).

EPA's [Cybersecurity 103](#) (November 12, 2025)

EPA's Water Infrastructure and Cyber Resilience Division (WICRD) will provide this technical assistance course to expand understandings of cybersecurity basic key terms, foundational principles, and a snapshot of its history in the Water Sector.

EPA's [Cybersecurity Refresher](#) (November 18, 2025)

EPA's Water Infrastructure and Cyber Resilience Division (WICRD) will provide a cybersecurity technical assistance course on to water and wastewater utilities to reinforce foundational understandings of cybersecurity and how it applies to the Water Sector.

EPA's [Water Cybersecurity Assessment Tool \(WCAT\) Webinar](#) (November 19, 2025)

EPA's Water Infrastructure and Cyber Resilience Division will be hosting a free training on our Water Cybersecurity Assessment Tool (WCAT).

11. 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 using the [Steps to Prepare Your PWS For Supply Chain Disruptions Flyer](#) and keep MassDEP/DWP informed of all Supply Chain issues.

12. *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](#).

13. *Drinking Water Trivia! Answer*

Answers:

Which of the following are water spirits? All of them

What is a superstition regarding running water? A or C