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

In the Main Newsletter – 11/03/2026

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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.



Harold Parker State Forest photo by Bill Damon

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1. Updating Well Driller Regulations

Please be advised that the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) is proposing amendments to 310 CMR 46.00, *Certification of Well Drillers and Filing of Well Completion Reports*, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 21G, §§ 21 and 40. The proposed amendments, the associated public notice, and background information may be found on the MassDEP Public Hearings & Comment Opportunities | Mass.gov page and on the 310 CMR 46.00: Certification of Well Drillers and Filing of Well Completion Reports | Mass.gov page.

Please contact Julie Butler (781-742-8467, julie.butler@mass.gov) or the Drinking Water Program Director (617-292-5770 or program.director-dwp@mass.gov) with any questions.

2. Applications Still Open for EEA Drought Resiliency and Water Efficiency Grant Program

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) is pleased to announce the third year of the **Drought Resiliency and Water Efficiency Grant Program**.

Application Deadline: November 12, 2026 by 11:59pm

Purpose: As droughts become more frequent due to climate change, water users across the Commonwealth need to find ways to reduce water usage and improve drought preparedness. This program will fund projects that help communities and public water suppliers reduce indoor and outdoor water use, enhance water loss control programs, and improve drought management/planning.

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
- Drought management planning and local drought plan development

Eligible Applicants:

- Municipalities
- Public water suppliers
- Non-profit organizations
- Public schools/colleges/universities
- Regional planning agencies

Award Amounts: Up to $50,000 per project

Detailed information, including application instructions and deadlines, is posted on **COMMBUYS.** More information can be found at the webpage Drought Resiliency and Water Efficiency Grant Program.

Questions can be directed to Purvi Patel at purvi.patel@mass.gov or Jason Duff at Jason.duff@mass.gov

3. Reminder for Drinking Water Operators Taking Exams: Include your Pre-Req Course Training Information in your Exam Registration

This is a reminder for operators registering for exams to include information about the pre-req training course they took (if applicable) when they complete their exam registration.

Pre-Req Training Course Requirement

If you are taking a Grade 2 or higher exam, you must take a pre-req training course or obtain a waiver from the Board to waive this requirement.

- For Distribution examinations for Grades 2-4, you must have successfully completed a Board-approved Basic Distribution training course. One training course covers Grades 2, 3, and 4.
- For Treatment examination for Grade 2, you must have successfully completed a Board-approved Basic Treatment training course.
- For Treatment examinations for Grades 3 and 4, you must have successfully completed a Board-approved Advanced Treatment training course.

The list of approved education courses can be found on the Board of Certification of Operators of Drinking Water Supply Facilities approved education courses to sit for examination page.

Exam Registration

When you register for your exam, you will be prompted with a field to input the Approved Training Course that you took. You should complete this field if you are registering for a Grade 2 or higher exam. If you obtained a waiver from the pre-req training requirements, you can indicate that in this field as well.

Below are the following course ID numbers for each pre-req training course approved by the Board.

	Training Course Provider	Course ID(s)
Basic Distribution	Bristol Community College	EXM-2020-04
	California State University – Sacramento	EXM-2025-02
	Massachusetts Rural Water Association (MassRWA)	EXM-2023-02
	Massachusetts Water Works Association (MWWA)	EXM-2012-04, EXM-2020-03

	Training Course Provider	Course ID(s)
	New England Water Works Association (NEWWA)	EXM-2011-01
Basic Treatment	Bristol Community College	EXM-2012-05, EXM-2025-01
	MassRWA	EXM-2023-01
	MWWA	EXM-2012-06, EXM-2019-01
	Minuteman High School	EXM-2013-08
	NEWWA	EXM-2011-02
Advanced Treatment	Bristol Community College	EXM-2020-01
	MWWA	EXM-2012-07, EXM-2021-01
	NEWWA	EXM-2011-03
Basic/Advanced Treatment	California State University – Sacramento (WTPO1 and WTPO2)	EXM-2020-02

Questions about the pre-req training course requirements and registering for your exam can be directed to the Drinking Water Board at DrinkingWaterBoard@mass.gov.

4. Drinking Water Supply Protection (DWSP) Grants 2027

The DWSP grant program provides reimbursement for proposed water supply land acquisitions. The purpose of the grants is to assist water suppliers in protecting drinking water quality. Eligible projects include land purchases and conservation restrictions. Proposed land acquisitions must be located in a MassDEP approved drinking water supply protection area, or in an area identified to protect a future water supply. Land acquisitions for drinking water must be approved by MassDEP. Eligible applicants include municipalities and water districts. For questions on the MassDEP approval process email Program.Director-DWP@mass.gov Subject: DWSP Grant. For more information on DWSP project eligibility and requirements visit the EEA DWSP Grant webpage. Potential applicants are encouraged to attend the **virtual information session on Monday, November 16, at 10:30 am** hosted via MS Teams. The deadline to apply is **February 18, 2027**.

Grant Details

- Maximum award: $375,000
- Reimbursement rate: 60%
- Grant bid release date: October 29, 2026
- Grant deadline: March 4, 2027, 11:59 P.M.

5. New DEP Fact Sheet: When Does a Farm Become a Public Water System?

As Massachusetts farms expand their services to include farm stands, pick-your-own operations, food and beverage offerings, and public restrooms, some may be subject to public drinking water regulations without realizing it.

Farms that operate their own water supply, such as a private well or spring, may qualify as a Public Water System (PWS) if they regularly serve an average of at least 25 individuals per day for at least 60 days per year. Many agricultural operations meeting these criteria are classified as Transient Non-Community (TNC) Public Water Systems. Currently, more than 50 agricultural operations across Massachusetts are regulated by MassDEP's Drinking Water Program as PWS.

To help farm owners and operators better understand these requirements, MassDEP has published a new Fact Sheet about Farms and Public Drinking Water. The fact sheet explains when an agricultural operation may qualify as a PWS, outlines applicable drinking water responsibilities, and provides guidance to help farms determine whether they may be subject to regulation.

Farm owner and operators are encouraged to review the fact sheet, particularly if they are expanding public-facing services or using a private water supply. Questions regarding PWS classifications or regulatory requirements should be directed to the Drinking Water Program at program.director-dwp@mass.gov.

6. LCR, LCRR, and LCRI Updates

Reminder: Service Line Inventory Consumer Notices Due December 31, 2026

Massachusetts public water systems (PWS) with service lines classified as **lead, galvanized requiring replacement (GRR), or unknown** in their Service Line Inventory (SLI) must distribute Service Line Inventory Consumer Notices (SLI CNs) by **December 31, 2026**, as required under the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR).

Who Must Receive a Notice?

Notices must be provided to the person(s) served at the premise address of every service line classified as lead, GRR, or unknown. In Massachusetts, if the property owner does not reside at the premise, an additional notice must be sent to the property owner. A different billing address may help identify these properties.

Notices are not required for inactive or abandoned properties where water service is shut off. However, the notice must be provided when water service is initiated.

What Must the Notice Include?

MassDEP has developed templates that meet the LCRR requirements. Notices must include:

- The service line classification and an explanation that a service line may contain or be lead.
- Health effects information about lead and steps to reduce exposure.

- Information about replacement opportunities and financing programs, as applicable to the service line classification.
- Information about opportunities to verify service line materials for unknown service lines, including lines classified as unknown only on the public side.
- Required language encouraging translation and sharing the notice with everyone who drinks water at the property.

PWS should use the current templates available on the MassDEP **Lead and Copper Forms and Templates** webpage: Lead & Copper Forms and Templates | Mass.gov.

Don't Forget to Certify Distribution

After distributing the notices, PWS must certify completion by submitting the SLI CN Certification Form by **July 1, 2027**. Please remember that the certification deadline for the last distribution cycle was **July 1, 2026**. Systems that have not yet completed their distribution or certification should address these outstanding requirements promptly.

Action item: If your system has lead, GRR, or unknown service lines, verify that all required notices have been distributed to the correct recipients and that your certification has been submitted. For systems with outstanding requirements, take corrective action as soon as possible.

7. Water Smart

Water-Smart Program Update

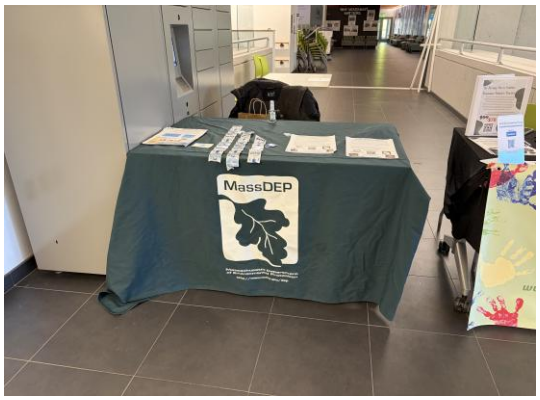
The Water-Smart program continues offering free analysis of lead drinking water samples and technical assistance to eligible public and private schools and early education and childcare facilities (EECFs). Currently, 1,416 schools and EECFs are participating in the program and 1,225 (87%) of participating facilities are within economically disadvantaged communities. To date, 1,292 schools and EECFs have completed testing. Of facilities that have tested and received results, 858 (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.

MAAEYC Fall Conference

On Saturday, October 24, the Water-Smart team attended the MAEEYC Fall Conference at Holyoke Community College. The conference featured a variety of sessions focused on provider engagement, hands on learning, and practical activities that early childhood educators could implement into their routines.

Attendees were encouraged to participate in sessions of their choice and connect with the various vendors in attendance. This year's vendors ranged from playground infrastructure, social emotional and behavioral development, and classroom activities designed to support children's learning and development.



The Water-Smart Outreach Coordinator, Eduardo Ceballos-Corro attended the conference to share program information and raise awareness about lead in drinking water in schools and childcare facilities. A takeaway was the engagement with Spanish speaking providers and facilities that were previously unfamiliar with the Water-Smart program.

Through participation in the conference, the Water-Smart team was able to increase awareness of available resources and free lead testing opportunities throughout Western Massachusetts.

Fall Seminar Planning

We are currently planning our Fall Water-Smart Seminar! The purpose of this seminar is to raise awareness about the Water-Smart Program and the free services available to schools and licensed childcare facilities. Like our previous seminars, we plan to host the event at a public location, such as a town library, school, or community center. We are currently planning to hold the seminar 5-7PM November 9th at Fall River Public Library.

If you are a licensed childcare provider or school in or near the Fall River area and would be interested in attending this event, please register here. We are also looking to partner with local organizations that work with schools or licensed childcare facilities to help promote the seminar.

If you know of an organization that may be interested in partnering with the Water-Smart Program, please feel free to share our information or put us in contact at program.director-dwp@mass.gov.

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."**

8. PFAS Update

AFF Takeback Program Still Active

MassDEP/DWP reminds PWS that the Aqueous Film-Forming Foam (AFFF) Takeback Program is still active!

The AFFF Takeback Program assists communities across the Commonwealth with collection and disposal of Aqueous Film-Forming Foam (AFFF) to remove the AFFF containing PFAS from stockpiles in the Commonwealth and helps to reduce the potential for its use.

If you have any questions or would like to request assistance, please reach out to the Drinking Water Program at program.director-dwp@mass.gov, Subject: AFFF Takeback Program, or contact Cathy Kiley at cathy.kiley@mass.gov.

9. 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 the official Massachusetts state marine animal?

A. Great White Shark
B. Elephant Tuna
C. Sperm Whale
D. North Atlantic Right Whale

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.

10. 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

Essential Policy Updates from AWWA's DC Office: Year-End 2026

Wednesday, November 4, 2026; 1:00 – 2:30 pm ET; webinar

AWWA's DC Office will host a year-end legislative update webinar for 2026. Experts in Washington will provide a status report of the current federal water policy landscape and will also discuss what to expect in 2027. Due to the timely nature of topics, webinar objectives, presenters, and details are announced

closer to the live air date. $75-member, $120-nonmember. Register for the webinar: Essential Policy Updates from AWWA's DC Office: Year-End 2026

EFCN Webinar: Basic Water Hydraulics – Concepts and Calculations for Drinking Water Operators

Tuesday, November 10th, 2026 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. EDT; Webinar

Understanding basic hydraulic principles is essential for the effective operation and maintenance of drinking water systems. This one-hour webinar introduces operators to the fundamental concepts of water hydraulics and demonstrates how these principles affect water movement through treatment facilities, storage systems, transmission mains, and distribution systems. Participants will learn key hydraulic terms, explore the relationships between flow, pressure, velocity, and head, and review common calculations used in daily operations. Through practical examples and operator-focused exercises, attendees will gain a better understanding of how hydraulic conditions impact system performance, water quality, and regulatory compliance. Register for the webinar: Basic Water Hydraulics – Concepts and Calculations for Drinking Water Operators

Eurofins Webinar: Preparing for UCMR6 – Challenges, Solutions, and Potential Outcomes

Tuesday, November 10th, 2026 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. EDT; Webinar

The U.S. EPA's proposed Sixth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 6) will require approximately 10,554 public water systems to monitor 30 unregulated contaminants between 2028 and 2030 using EPA Methods 524.3, 525.3, 540, and 563. Target analytes include ultrashort-chain PFAS, pesticides and metabolites, industrial solvents, and chemical intermediates. The resulting data will support national exposure assessments, public health decisions, and future regulatory actions. Successful implementation depends on laboratory readiness and capacity to meet stringent analytical requirements, including low reporting limits, contamination control, method validation, and quality assurance. This presentation examines key analytical challenges and solutions for UCMR 6 preparation, drawing on lessons from previous UCMRs and EPA laboratory approval requirements. It will address method-specific considerations, including instrument sensitivity, sample stability, matrix effects, and quality control, as well as preliminary insights into selected contaminants such as trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) and 1,2,3-trichloropropane (TCP). Potential implications for exposure assessment, treatment strategies, research priorities, and future regulations will also be discussed. Register for the webinar: Preparing for UCMR6 - Challenges, Solutions, and Potential Outcomes

EPA Webinar: Emergency Drinking Water Supply Planning

Tuesday, November 17th, 2026 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EDT; Webinar

Under SDWA section 1433, ERPs must address the supply of drinking water provided to communities and individuals, including planning alternative water supplies in the event of a disruption. In this webinar, EPA will cover the basics of planning for an Emergency Drinking Water Supply to include in your ERP. Register for the webinar: Emergency Drinking Water Supply Planning

EPA Webinar: Water Sector Utility Case Studies for Building Resilience to Natural Hazards

Wednesday, December 9th, 2026 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. EDT; Webinar

EPA's Strengthening Water Infrastructure for Tomorrow (SWIFT) technical assistance is tailored to meet the needs of each utility request, from building risk and resilience assessments, to updating emergency response plans, to quantifying the potential reductions in risk that specific resilience 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: Water Sector Utility Case Studies for Building Resilience to Natural Hazards

EPA Webinar: Building Winter Weather Resilience for Water Sector Utilities

Wednesday, January 13th, 2027 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. EDT; Webinar

Ready for the winter season? EPA's Strengthening Water Infrastructure for Tomorrow (SWIFT) experts can provide customized technical assistance to help your utility build resilience to winter weather hazards through risk-informed project planning and investment. Review this winter's seasonal outlook, learn about the SWIFT technical assistance experience, and explore tools that can help your utility better understand and assess system impacts and identify resilient solutions. Register for the webinar: Building Winter Weather Resilience for Water Sector Utilities

11. Cybersecurity, Emergency Preparedness, and You!

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

Biweekly Spotlight

Stay Vigilant!! Considering 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:

- Perform a free cybersecurity assessment for your system: MassDEP DWP 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 that 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
- Identify and disconnect OT and ICS assets from the public internet. Adopt a deny-by-default allowlist policy to prevent unauthorized access if an asset's remote access cannot be removed.
- Create an inventory of OT/IT assets to help understand what you need to protect.
- Ensure devices and accounts are protected with strong, unique passwords.
- Change default or insecure passwords immediately.
- Implement phishing-resistant MFA for accessing OT networks from any other network.
- Prioritize monitoring user access logs for remote access to the OT network and for implementation of any firmware or configuration changes.

12. 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 MaWARN.

13. 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.

14. Drinking Water Trivia! Answer

Answer: D

The NA Right Whale was designated the official MA state marine mammal in 1980.