



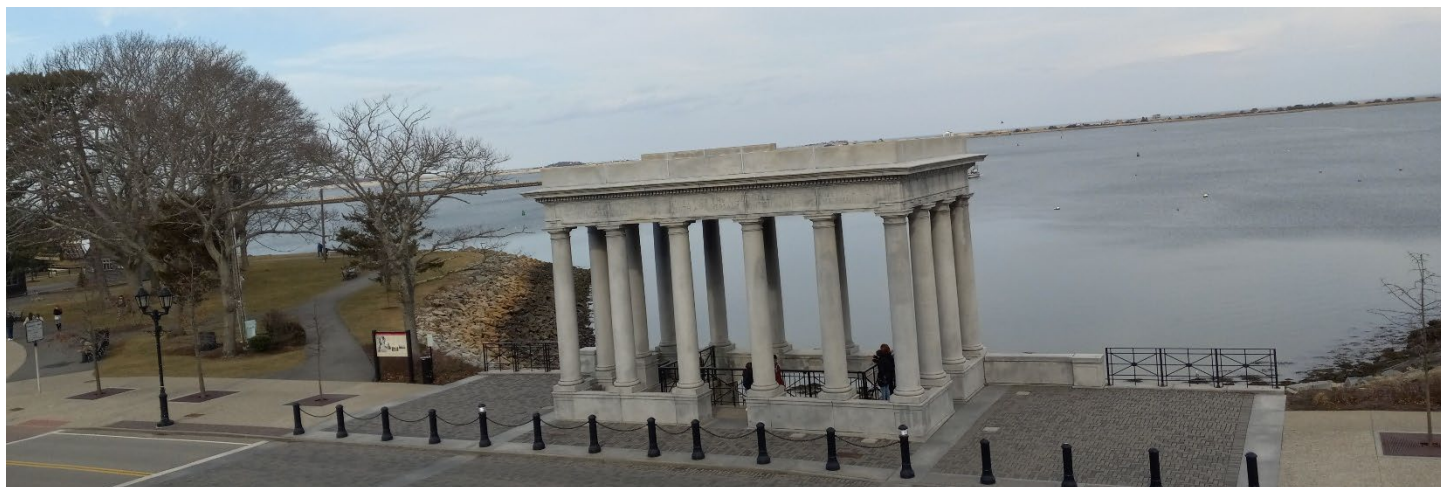
MassDEP / Drinking Water Program

100 Cambridge Street – 9th Floor; Boston, MA 02114

Program.Director-DWP@mass.gov or 617-292-5770

In The Main - The Drinking Water Updates can be found online at:

mass.gov/lists/communication-to-public-water-suppliers or at the Statehouse Archives at:
<https://archives.lib.state.ma.us/handle/2452/826119> which has a searchable database.



Plymouth Rock, Photo by: Eric Cheung

This *In The Main* newsletter has these topics of interest

2023-11-16

1. REMINDER: Operator License Renewals Due Before December 31, 2023
2. Getting Ready for the LCRR
3. Lead in Schools and Childcare Facilities Drinking Water Update
4. PFAS Update
5. Training Calendar
6. Cybersecurity, Emergency Preparedness, and You!
7. Supply Chain Reminders



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

Use the search function in the Statehouse Archives at: <https://archives.lib.state.ma.us/handle/2452/826119>

REMINDER: Operator License Renewals Due Before December 31, 2023

This year is a renewal year for all certified operators in Massachusetts! Under the provisions of 236 CMR 4.07, operator licenses expire December 31 of every odd-numbered year. Operators seeking to renew their license(s) must submit a license renewal fee and certification that they have completed the required number of training contact hours (TCHs) for the highest-grade license they hold.

The Board of Certification of Operators of Drinking Water Supply Facilities (the Board) will be reviewing all license renewal applications. This coming year, the Board may perform some audits on license renewals to confirm the correct TCHs were obtained.

Information on how to renew an operator license on ePlace can be found on the page [Renew Your Board of Certification of Operators of Drinking Water Supply Facilities License](#).

Additionally, operators can reference the [FAQ](#) page or contact the [Board](#) with any questions.

Resources for Finding Board-Approved Trainings

The [Information on Required Training for License Renewal](#) page includes information about the number of required TCHs for each license grade and other information about receiving and documenting TCHs.

Additionally, operators can use the following resources to find Board-approved trainings.

- Organizations with blanket approval for trainings:
 - [MA Water Works Association](#)
 - [MA Rural Water Association](#)
 - [New England Water Works Association](#)
 - [MA Water Resources Authority](#) (note: trainings for MWRA employees only)
 - [Western MA Waterworks Association](#)
- MassDEP [Training Calendars](#):
 - [Free trainings](#) and [fee-based trainings](#)
 - Note: Not all trainings listed have been Board-approved. Confirm approval with the training provider or the Board.

Getting Ready for the LCRR

EPA announces New Technical Assistance Opportunity: Get the Lead Out

Using more than **\$15 billion** available through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), EPA will be partnering with **200** underserved communities to provide technical assistance to identify and remove lead service lines and to create lead service line replacement plans (LSLRP). This new **Get the Lead Out Initiative (GLO)** is designed to ensure safe drinking water by prioritizing the removal of lead service lines nationally. **Drinking Water Utilities/Systems are eligible to apply!**

How do I apply?

Systems can request assistance by completing the WaterTA request form here:

<https://www.epa.gov/water-infrastructure/forms/water-technical-assistance-request-form>

To see the news release, click the link here: <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-announces-new-get-lead-out-initiative-accelerate-removal#:~:text=As%20part%20of%20the%20Biden,to%20get%20the%20lead%20out.>

Lead in Schools and Childcare Facilities

Drinking Water Update

Check out the Expanded Assistance Program Facebook Page

The Expanded Assistance Program posts regularly on the Program Facebook page. Visit the

page for program updates, information about lead sources and health effects, trivia, tips of the week, and more!

<https://www.facebook.com/leadatumass>

Expanded Assistance Program Update

The Expanded Assistance Program for Lead in Schools and Early Education and Care Facilities (EECF) Drinking Water provides free analysis of lead drinking water samples and technical assistance to schools and 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. MassDEP also worked with the Clean Water Trust to secure additional funding to expand assistance to private schools.

Currently, 726 schools and EECFs are participating in the program and 448 (62%) of participating facilities are within environmental justice communities. To date, 501 schools and EECFs have completed testing. Of facilities that have tested and received results, 338 (67%) had one or more lead detections.

Do you know of any schools or childcare facilities that could benefit from the Expanded Assistance 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://script.google.com/macros/s/AKfycbyr_U8wEMrA-Q2XifkK4l58x4GDtYrItvpKIKUAhSxpW9pSZtA/exec

PFAS Update

EPA does not intend to pursue CERCLA enforcement for PFAS contamination for certain parties including water utilities, as reported in the [National Law Review on October 13, 2023](#)

Last year, EPA proposed to designate PFOA and PFOS as hazardous substances under CERCLA and is currently reviewing comments received on the proposed rule. The EPA has stated that they are developing a CERCLA PFAS enforcement discretion and settlement policy.

EPA intends to focus on manufacturers, federal facilities, and other industrial parties whose actions result in the release of significant amounts of PFAS. EPA may choose not to take CERCLA enforcement action against certain entities. EPA does not intend to pursue CERCLA enforcement for PFAS contamination against the following parties:

- Water utilities and publicly owned treatment works (POTW);
- Publicly owned and/or operated municipal solid waste landfills;
- Farms that apply biosolids; and
- Certain airports and fire departments (state, Tribal, or municipal airports and Tribal or local fire departments).

PFAS Construction

- 46 new water treatment facilities or additions to existing WTFs have been constructed and activated by Public Water Suppliers (PWS) to remove PFAS (temporary and permanent systems).

- 6 small PWS were connected to a municipal water system and declassified as PWS.

See Tab 6 on the [MassDEP PFAS storymap](#) for details.

Training Calendar

When you need training, please look at the training calendar located at:

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/drinking/drinking-water-training-class-schedules.html>.

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 page and view the approved education courses to sit for examination. Go to: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/drinking-water-board-approved-education-courses-updated-september-2020/download>.

Some Newly Added Trainings on the Calendar

EPA Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series: Risk, Crisis, and General Communication

Tuesday, November 28, 2023; 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET; webinar

The EPA Office of Research and Development and Office of Water is hosting a free webinar as part of the Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series. This webinar will include topics related to risk, crisis, and general communication. Attendees will hear presentations about the importance of customer communication and risk communication toolkits and case studies.

[Register here](#).

EPA: How to Prepare Your Utility for Disasters – A Webinar for Very Small Drinking Water Systems that Serve Under 3,301 People


Tuesday, December 12, 2023; 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET; webinar

Join the USEPA for a free webinar on how to prepare your utility for disasters. This webinar is targeted to very small drinking water systems serving under 3,301 customers who do NOT need to comply with AWIA for the purpose of providing these very small systems with information regarding how to create Risk and Resilience Assessments (RRA) and Emergency Response Plans (ERP) voluntarily. Attendees will see a demonstration on how to develop RRAs and ERPs using cybersecurity and wildfire scenarios, as well as be presented with 10 tips on how to prepare their utilities for disasters. [Register here](#)

- **MassDEP**
[Previous Cybersecurity Trainings now on YouTube:](#)
 - Basic Cybersecurity Measures for Water Utilities: <https://youtu.be/78v3eAyf1yE>
 - Ransomware Experiences, Defense, and Response: <https://youtu.be/eislsdQnXqE>
- **Environmental Finance Center Network**
For a complete list of trainings webinars and in-person trainings please go to: <https://efcnetwork.org/upcoming-events/>
- **EPA**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to: <https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/drinking-water-training>.

- **Mass Rural Water Association**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to:
<https://www.massrwa.org/p/14/Trainings—Events>.
- **MWWA**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to:
[MWWA Calendar](#)
- **NEWWA**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to:
https://communityhub.newwa.org/nc__upcomingevents.
- **Water ISAC**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to:
<https://www.waterisac.org/resources>.
- **RCAP Solutions**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to:
<https://www.rcapsolutions.org/events/>.
- **AWWA**
For a complete list of trainings, webinars and in-person trainings, please go to:
https://www.awwa.org/Events-Education/Events-Calendar?utm_term=AWWA+Connections+10-8-2021&utm_content=Connections+10-8-2021&utm_source=communications&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=connections.

Training Refresher

If you need a refresher on recently given trainings, you can review several training videos located at: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJn2AKOcYr7lutGJB-UfDKtQPF_o_249m or click here:  **YouTube**

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. You may also request to be unsubscribed by replying to this email.

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, go <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/safe-drinking-water-act-assessment-advisory-committee-section-70-committee>.

Cybersecurity, Emergency Preparedness, and You!

2023-11-16

PLEASE SHARE THIS CYBERSECURITY INFORMATION WITH YOUR SCADA & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STAFF



Be Vigilant!



Report all incidents and anomalous activity to [CISA](#) and/or the FBI via your local [FBI field office](#) or the FBI's 24/7 CyWatch at 855-292-3937 or cywatch@ic.fbi.gov



Regularly review CISA'S [Shields Up](#) page.



EPA FREE CYBERSECURITY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM: 47 PWS have already used this no cost opportunity.

Take advantage of this opportunity and join the group of proactive PWS that have done so. Strengthen your PWS cybersecurity posture and register for the EPA Cybersecurity Assessment right away. Register with simple steps by using the following link: <https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/forms/epas-water-sector-cybersecurity-evaluation-program>. For additional resources visit [EPA Cybersecurity for the Water Sector | US EPA](#).



CISA Free In-Person Cybersecurity Assessments for Selected 20 PWS in Massachusetts: 11 PWS have already signed up.

Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) in collaboration with MassDEP/ DWP is providing in-person cyber assessment to 20 pre-selected Public Water Systems (PWS) in Massachusetts. These PWS were chosen based on criteria such as PWS type, size, and particularly the timing of their sanitary surveys.

If your PWS is among the pre-selected group and you haven't yet indicated your interest in this valuable opportunity, we urge you to do so at your earliest convenience. Your prompt response would be greatly appreciated. Please let us know at program.director-dwp@mass.gov. Subject: CISA Cybersecurity Assessments

Keep Us Informed when you register for EPA, CISA or other partners' offers for free cybersecurity vulnerability assessments at program.director-dwp@mass.gov. Subject Cyber security.

NEW Critical Infrastructure Security Updates:

FBI and CISA Release Advisory on Scattered Spider Group

- The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) released a joint Cybersecurity Advisory (CSA) on [Scattered Spider](#)—a cybercriminal group targeting commercial facilities sectors and subsectors. The advisory provides tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) obtained through FBI investigations as recently as November 2023.
- Scattered Spider threat actors typically engage in data theft for extortion using multiple social engineering techniques and have recently leveraged BlackCat/ALPHV ransomware alongside their usual TTPs.
- FBI and CISA encourage network defenders and [critical infrastructure organizations](#) to review the joint CSA for recommended mitigations to reduce the likelihood and impact of a cyberattack by Scattered Spider actors. For more information, visit [StopRansomware](#) and see the updated [#StopRansomware Guide](#).

CISA and FBI Release Update to Royal Ransomware Cybersecurity Advisory

- The FBI and CISA recently published an update to the joint Cybersecurity Advisory “#StopRansomware: Royal Ransomware.”
 - The updated advisory provides network defenders with additional information on tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) and indicators of compromise (IOCs) associated with Royal ransomware variants. FBI investigations identified these TTPs and IOCs as recently as June 2023. [Full article](#)
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CISA: Expansion of the Secure Tomorrow Series Toolkit Now Available

- CISA has released the latest Secure Tomorrow Series Toolkit, a diverse array of interactive products to empower critical infrastructure stakeholders on how to use strategic foresight methods to identify and mitigate emerging risks. [Full article](#)

CISA ICS Vulnerability Advisories and Alerts, Updates, and Bulletins

- Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's (CISA) recent ICS vulnerability advisories, as well as alerts, updates, and bulletins can be found [here](#).

Upcoming Trainings



How to Prepare Your Utility for Disasters: A Webinar for Very Small Drinking Water Systems that Serve Under 3,301 People

Tuesday, December 12, 2023; 2:00 p.m- 3:30 p.m. ET; webinar

Join the US EPA for a free webinar on how to prepare your utility for disasters! This webinar will demonstrate how to create a Risk and Resilience Assessment (RRA) and Emergency Response Plan (ERP) using fire and cybersecurity scenarios, provide information on a new opportunity where operators may be eligible to earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for creating an RRA and ERP, share 10 quick and easy tips on how to prepare your utility for disasters. This workshop is meant for very small drinking water systems (those that serve under 3,301 people and do not need to comply with America's Water Infrastructure Act). Technical assistance providers and consultants are also encouraged to attend. [Register now](#)

SANS Webinar: The Industrial (ICS/OT) Cyber Threat Landscape

Thursday, December 14, 2023; 7:15 p.m. ET; webinar

This webinar will give an introduction to ICS/OT followed by an in-depth discussion on the changes that are taking place in the industrial world such as digital transformation as a precursor to an in-depth discussion on the threats. The webinar will cover new adversary groups targeting industrial networks, the trends to watch, and make recommendations with a walkthrough of the SANS ICS five critical controls. [Register now](#)

MassDEP Cybersecurity Reminders:

- **Cybersecurity Continues to Be an Important Component of Providing Safe Drinking Water in Massachusetts**
- MassDEP posters with cybersecurity tips to help keep your systems secure <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/public-drinking-water-system-operations#cybersecurity->
- Public Water Systems may include cybersecurity planning in DWSRF Asset Management Grant applications <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/asset-management-planning-grant-program>
- Other Grants <https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/cybersecurity-funding>

Supply Chain Reminders

PWSs are reminded to implement the steps identified by DWP at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/steps-to-prepare-your-public-water-system-for-supply-chain-disruptions/download> and keep MassDEP/DWP informed of all Supply Chain issues.

Resources:

- MassDEP poster on supply chain issues planning and response with steps to prepare PWS for supply chain disruptions. See/download the poster here <https://www.mass.gov/doc/steps-to-prepare-your-public-water-system-for-supply-chain-disruptions/download>
 - [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 be can also be useful for finding alternative chemical suppliers in the case of supply chain shortages.
 - Join [MassWARN](#).
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- [EPA page on supply chain disruptions](#), includes information on issues impacting availability and price and also provides recommendations utilities can take to respond to shortages and position themselves for the future.
 - [Water and Wastewater Supply Chain Case Studies](#)
 - [Water Treatment Chemical Supply Chain Profiles](#)
 - [Understanding Water Treatment Chemical Supply Chains and the Risk of Disruptions](#)
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