



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Department of Environmental Protection

Drinking Water Program

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New Drinking Water System Facility Self-Guide

Minimum System Permitting and Approval Process for Consecutive Public Water Systems

Last Revised: 7/7/2026

The purpose of this Drinking Water Program (DWP) Facility Self Guide is to assist new consecutive public water systems (PWS) to prepare drinking water program permit applications and requests for approval that comply with [current Massachusetts regulations, policies, and guidelines](#). Completion of this self-guide will ensure that the applicant has considered minimum permitting aspects identified by the MassDEP Drinking Water Program. Important Reminder: MassDEP may require additional information as regulations, standards, or procedures are implemented or revised.

Please note: This self-guide does not need to be submitted to MassDEP, but may be used in planning consultations with MassDEP staff. MassDEP ultimately determines the regulatory status of all parent and consecutive systems and identifies all permits and documentation required to make this determination. Please read the [Consecutive Systems guide](#) for more information.

What is a Public Water System?

A Public Water System (PWS), as defined by the [Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations \(310 CMR 22.00\)](#) is a system for the provision to the public of water for human consumption, through pipes or other constructed conveyances, if such system has at least 15 service connections or regularly serves an average of at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days of the year. A public water system includes a "community water system" or a "non-community water system".

- A community (COM) water system is a PWS that serves at least 15 service connections used by year-round residents or regularly serves at least 25-year round residents.
- A non-transient non-community (NTNC) water system is a PWS that is not a Community Water System and that has at least 15 service connections or regularly serves at least 25 of the same individuals or more approximately four or more hours

per day, four or more days per week, more than six months or 180 days per year; such as a workplace providing water to its employees (e.g. hospitals).

- A transient non-community (TNC) water system is a PWS that is not a Community Water System or a Non-transient Non-community Water System, but is a Public Water System which has at least 15 service connections or serves water to 25 different persons at least 60 days per year. Some examples of these types of systems are: restaurants, motels, camp grounds, parks, golf courses, ski areas and community centers.

Refer to [MassDEP Drinking Water Policies # 88-10 and # 88-11](#) for calculating daily consumption and residential populations.

Consecutive PWS and Applicability of This Self-Guide

A Consecutive PWS is a PWS that receives some or all of its finished water from one or more wholesale systems. Delivery may be through a direct connection or through the distribution system of one or more consecutive systems. **Very Important: A facility that receives water from a currently registered MassDEP PWS (e.g. the supplying or “parent” system) but installs additional water treatment systems becomes a consecutive PWS and is therefore required to comply with Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations because the facility has created a PWS subject to 310 CMR 22.00.** The Safe Drinking Water Act does not differentiate between hot and cold water; therefore, your facility becomes a consecutive PWS even if you install treatment on only one of the water sources (i.e. hot or cold). Read the [Consecutive Systems guide](#) for more information. **Please note: MassDEP ultimately determines the regulatory status of all parent and consecutive PWS and identifies all permits and documentation required to make this determination.**

Consecutive PWS are required to comply with the Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations (310 CMR 22.00). If MassDEP determines that a Consecutive PWS is exempt from 310 CMR 22.00 based on the consecutive system meeting the criteria in 310 CMR 22.03(a) through (e), the supplying system shall thereafter be responsible for the compliance of the combined system with 310 CMR 22.00, including the requirement to obtain the Department’s approval for a substantial modification to an existing PWS pursuant to 310 CMR 22.04. Refer to [DWP Policy 08-01](#) for information on substantial modifications to a PWS requiring a permit.

Important Note: Hospitals or medical facilities or other facilities in Massachusetts that are served by a currently registered MassDEP public water system that plan to install secondary disinfection water treatment systems, like chlorine dioxide, to control *Legionella* must comply with the Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations because they have created a consecutive public water system (PWS) subject to 310 CMR 22.00. A current list of registered MassDEP public water systems can be downloaded at the [MassDEP Water Supplier Operations website](#) under “Reporting & Public Notification.”

Key requirements include developing and submitting a detailed plan and permit applications, having it signed by a professional engineer, notifying MassDEP and the supplying public water system, and following strict protocols for the treatment process and safety. These facilities are also subject to federal requirements from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), which mandate water management policies and risk assessments for *Legionella*. If the treatment system you plan to install is not currently approved for use in Massachusetts (per the [Massachusetts List of Approved Technologies](#)), you will need to apply for New Technology Approval. Review the [New Technology Program presentation](#) for information about this process.

Refer to the [Guide for Determining Permanent or Secondary Disinfection](#) for a facility, such as a hospital, that becomes a MassDEP-regulated public water system. Additionally, you may be required to complete the [Temporary Secondary Disinfection Form A](#) if your facility currently receives water from a PWS but is not currently a registered PWS.

Visit the [Drinking Water Policies and Guidance webpage](#) to access policies applicable to PWS and review guidance on topics such as water quality testing, organizational planning, and sub-metering.

Instructions to Applicant – How to Use This Self Guide

1. [Find the regional MassDEP office](#) for your city or town where your facility is located.
2. Contact the regional MassDEP office in advance of planning for a new or substantial modification to your facility. MassDEP staff will help you to identify all permits and approvals that you will need.

MassDEP Contact List for System Approval

DEP Region	Contact Name and Email	Contact Phone
NERO (Northeast)	Melissa Dwinell melissa.dwinell@mass.gov	857-278-5348
SERO (Southeast)	Jim McLaughlin james.m.mclaughlin@mass.gov	508-946-2805
CERO (Central)	Randy Swigor randy.swigor@mass.gov	781-459-9270
WERO (Western)	Andrew Kelly Andrew.kelly@mass.gov Christine Simard Christine.Simard@mass.gov	413-755-2230 857-248-2081
Drinking Water Program (General)	program.director-dwp@mass.gov	617-292-5770

3. Discuss your plans with MassDEP staff and check off all required items on the attached self-guide. Review the web links for more information on any item. You

may wish to record the name of the MassDEP staff you contacted and the date for future contact.

4. If the treatment system you plan to install is not currently approved for use in Massachusetts (per the [Massachusetts List of Approved Technologies](#)), you will need to apply for New Technology Approval. Review the [New Technology Program presentation](#) for information about this process.
5. Submit your permit and/or approval request as specified by your regional contact and the MassDEP information. MassDEP has various application fees with a waiver policy in certain cases. Refer to the [MassDEP Permitting Assistance website](#) for more information or to the schedule of water supply fees and permit codes.

New Drinking Water System – Self Guide

For Minimum MassDEP/DWP Approvals. Permits and Other Required Documents Needed for New Consecutive System Approval. Please note that PWS may need to coordinate with other Massachusetts departments (e.g. [Department of Public Health](#), [Department of Public Utilities](#)).

Required Information MassDEP requires the following determinations before additional permits and approvals can be determined. Complete the following questions to the best of your ability. Please note that MassDEP will make the final determination and direct you to complete additional permits and approvals as necessary.
Consecutive Public Water System – If a facility plans to become a consecutive system to a currently registered MassDEP/DWP PWS (also called the Parent system) listed on the MassDEP Water Supplier Operations website under “Reporting & Public Notification” and will rely on the currently registered PWS Parent system to carry out some but not all of the MassDEP required PWS operational functions, a written summary agreement between the new public water system and the MassDEP-approved supplying public water system (Parent system) with an existing PWSID number is needed for submittal per Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations 310 CMR 22.03 Compliance. Go to the MassDEP website for examples of written agreements. Do you plan to become a consecutive public water system? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Public Water System Type – Based on the definitions for Community, Non-Transient Non-Community, and Transient Non-Community PWS included in the section “What is a Public Water System?” above, please identify the type of PWS that best matches your facility. Please note that MassDEP will make the final determination about your PWS’s type. PWS Type: _____

Item #	Permit/Approval or Other Documentation Needed	Comments
Check ✓ if applicable after discussion with MassDEP contact	MassDEP may require the following permits or approvals prior to the system receiving final approval to operate. The following permits and approvals are listed in likely sequence; however, the final sequencing will be decided by the progress of each item and discussion with your MassDEP regional contact. View the web link for more information on each item.	Include explanations of not applicable (N/A) items in this column.
1 ☐	Capacity Development – The Business Plan for Water Supplies must be submitted.	
2 ☐	New Technology Permit – Must be completed for drinking water additives, chemicals, treatment devices, or	

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	equipment if a product or operation will come into contact with a public water supply and is not already on the MassDEP List of Approved Technologies .	
3 ☐	Chemical Addition Permit – Submit proper form for approval to add any treatment chemical, such as bleach or lime, to the water depending on the proposed population to be served: a) Chemical Addition Permit - BRP WS 34 Chemical Addition Retrofit for Systems That Serve Less Than or Equal to 3,300 People ; or b) Chemical Addition Permit – BRP WS 29 Chemical Addition Retrofit for Systems That Serve More Than 3,300 People	
4 ☐	Distribution System Permit – Submit proper form depending on proposed population to be served: a) Distribution Modifications Permit BRP WS 32 for systems that serve 3,300 people or more in the modification of a drinking water distribution system, such as storage tanks, distribution pump stations, and transmission main installation; or b) Distribution Modifications Permit BRP WS 33 for systems that serve 3,300 people or less in the modification of a drinking water distribution system, such as storage tanks, distribution pump stations, and transmission main installation. A map of the distribution system including all pipes, valves, hydrants, storage facilities, etc. must also be submitted.	
5 ☐	Operation and Maintenance (O&M) – Submit O&M procedures for all treatment**. Preventative maintenance schedule log of routine operation and maintenance tasks must also be developed and submitted.	
6 ☐	Spare Parts to be made available for all applicable components**.	
7 ☐	Waste Disposal Permit** (If applicable) – PWS must submit a Waste Disposal Plan per MassDEP Guidelines for Public Water Systems Chapter 5.10 Waste Handling and Disposal .	

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8 ☐	Asbestos in Distribution System Exemption Form – For PWS who are able to certify that their distribution system does not contain any asbestos-cement pipe and/or asbestos-cement vinyl lined pipe.	
9 ☐	Energy Saving Report or Statement* (If applicable) – Summary discussion to be submitted per MassDEP Guidelines for Public Water Systems Chapter 1.2.10 Energy Efficiency Encouraged .	
10 ☐	Cross Connections Program Plan *	
11 ☐	Emergency Response Plan (ERP)* – Required for all PWS. Refer to MassDEP Guidelines for Public Water Systems Chapter 12 Emergency Response Planning and Appendix O Handbook for Water Supply Emergencies. Important: Cybersecurity must be addressed in all PWS ERP. Cybersecurity must be integrated into the routine operations and maintenance of the PWS to ensure the continuity of safe drinking water. PWS must have a cybersecurity program/plan and conduct a cybersecurity assessment. PWS are expected to eliminate cybersecurity vulnerabilities identified by their cybersecurity assessment. Find cybersecurity resources at the MassDEP Cybersecurity Resource Hub.	
12 ☐	Service Line Inventory (SLI) – Must be completed by all NTNC and COM PWS. PWS must submit the MassDEP SLI Workbook (or the No Split Ownership workbook, if applicable). The Workbook files and Instructions for the workbook(s) are available on the Lead and Copper Forms webpage. PWS must also submit the SLI Certification Form with their SLI. PWS must also submit the No Lead Service Lines Certification if PWS's SLI only contains Non Lead Service Lines.	

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	Should a PWS not have any service lines, PWS may complete the No SLI Certification Form. This form will be provided upon request.	
13 ☐	Certified Operator* – Submit name and staffing plan of hired certified operator responsible to run PWS system. Also complete the Typical Duties and Responsibilities form(s) for each system type and Certified Operator Compliance Notice, if applicable. Information about becoming a certified operator can be found at the website for the Board of Certification of Operators of Drinking Water Supply Facilities Information about contracting with a certified operator can be found at the webpage Certified Operator Directory	
14 ☐	Other permit(s), approval(s) or documents as determined by the MassDEP	
15 ☐	Final Approval of Completed Works Letter from MassDEP which includes the issuance of a PWSID number (generated by MassDEP) and a Sampling Schedule*. Refer to Massachusetts Drinking Water Program Testing Requirements for Public Water Systems. Once a system is approved and in operation, the following minimum reports and information are required: - Community water systems are required to test their water for coliform bacteria and other contaminants specified in the regulations and on their sampling schedule using a state certified lab and report the results. Refer to the list of contaminants on the Drinking Water Standards and Guidelines webpage. Chemical Addition Report to be submitted monthly (if any treatment chemicals are added to PWS)** Water Treatment Chemical Feed System Control and Alarm Testing Log** Consumer Confidence Reports (annually to customers required) Safe Drinking Water Act Assessment. Bills for the Massachusetts Federal Safe Drinking Water Act Assessment are mailed to all public water systems	

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	based on water use reported for previous calendar year. Minimum bill is \$50.00. 6. Annual Statistical Reporting (eASR) Form (This report is submitted online and requires proof of identity) 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____ 11. _____ 12. _____	

* The approval for this item is generally included in final approval of complete works.

**The approval for this item is usually given for the specific component, but approval may also be included in the final approval of complete works.

Applicants may wish to keep the following information:

Location of new PWS: _____

Date of contact or consultation with MassDEP staff: _____

Name, phone # and email address of MassDEP contact: _____