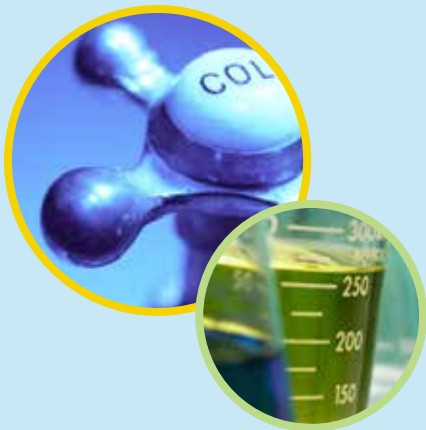


You Should Know...

- *How do I know that my water is safe to drink?*
The public water systems in Massachusetts are among the best in the country, and they are subject to the most stringent government standards in the world.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and MassDEP require your local public water supplier to perform ongoing tests for bacteria, lead and other heavy metals, pesticides, and industrial solvents. If testing shows an exceedance of a federal standard, the public water supplier is required to notify customers through local news media. If bacteria or chemicals are found at levels that pose a threat to your health, the public water system is treated to remove the contaminants or taken out of service if the problem cannot be solved immediately.



How Can I Help?

You can help protect your local public drinking water by doing a few simple things:

- Conserve water.
- Maintain your septic system.
- Pick up your dog's waste.
- Use herbicides & fertilizers only when necessary.
- **Stay Informed** by reviewing a copy of your public water system's Consumer Confidence Report. Go to www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/drinking/water-systems-ops.html#7.
- Support your local PWS!

For Public Drinking Water information visit MassDEP's web site at www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/drinking/.



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July 2014

The Value of Public Drinking

Water



*What is the best value around?
It's the cool, clean, refreshing, safe
water that flows from your tap.
It is public drinking water!*



Water Is Essential For Life

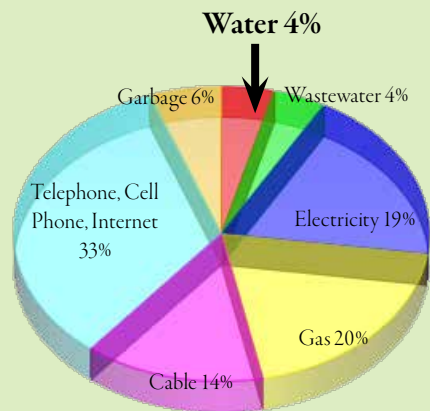
Water is delivered to you 24/7/365. A day without water can mean:

- No drinking.
- No flushing.
- No brushing.
- No showers, laundry, or dishwashing.
- No putting out fires.

Drinking Water Costs

Drinking water accounts for only 4% of the average United States household's monthly utilities costs.

Average U.S. Household Monthly Utilities Costs



You Should Know...

- *What is a public water system (PWS)?* The federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) defines a PWS as one that serves water to at least 25 persons or 15 service connections for at least 60 days each year. There are 1,735 PWSs in Massachusetts. Many municipalities operate a PWS. There are also many businesses and other entities that do as well. For example, many restaurants, campgrounds, gas stations, child care facilities, etc., are regulated as a PWS if they have a well that serves water to the public or to employees. For a list of all Massachusetts PWSs, visit www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/drinking/health-and-safety.html#3
- *Who oversees PWSs in Massachusetts?* The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) has the primary responsibility for regulating PWSs, rather than the federal government, under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). This is called primacy. By maintaining primacy, MassDEP ensures the safe production of drinking water while implementing state specific programs that save PWSs and their customers millions of dollars.
- *Who operates PWSs?* Each PWS is operated by state-licensed professionals who ensure that your



water is clean and safe to drink 24 hours a day. These state licensed professionals are called certified operators. Certified Drinking Water Operators supervise the operation of the water treatment plant, test your water every day, and protect it for the future. That protection includes owning land (PWSs are some of the best stewards of open spaces in Massachusetts!), conducting public education, and being ready to respond to spills and other emergencies.

In 2014 the SDWA is 40 years old! Does it still address today's issues with drinking water? Yes, the SDWA still protects drinking water and is amended by Congress as needed. It has become stricter over time by requiring that water be tested for more contaminants and to protect everyone, including vulnerable populations.

SDWA Regulated Contaminants

