

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

This report contains important information about your drinking water. Please translate it or speak with someone who understands it or ask the contact listed below for a translation.

Townsend Water Department located in Townsend, Massachusetts has levels of PFAS6 above the Drinking Water Standard

What happened?

Our water system recently received notification of PFAS6 results showing that **our system violated the 20 ng/L PFAS6 Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) drinking water standard during the April – June 2021 compliance period with a quarterly average of 23 ng/L.** The PFAS6 results of the first sample collected from our Harbor Trace Pump Station on March 10, 2021, was 46 ng/L requiring a confirmation sample to be collected to determine compliance. A confirmation sample was collected on April 13, 2021, and reported a level of PFAS6 at 68.6 ng/L. Exceedance of the MCL has been determined from the April 13, 2021 results. Compliance with the PFAS6 MCL is calculated as a quarterly average; even if results for the remaining months in the April – June compliance period are zero, the average of the three months will still exceed the quarterly standard.

The location where elevated levels of PFAS6 were reported is one of four sources that supplies drinking water to our system. PFAS6 levels were reported below the PFAS6 MCL at our other sources.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. Although this is not an emergency, as a consumer of the water, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we did and are doing to correct this situation.

On October 2, 2020, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) issued a new drinking water regulation setting a maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 20 nanograms per liter (ng/L) for the sum of six per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (called PFAS6). PFAS6 includes perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS), perfluorodecanoic acid (PFDA) and perfluoroheptanoic acid (PFHpA).

PFAS are man-made chemicals that have been used in the manufacturing of certain fire-fighting foams, moisture and stain resistant products, and other industrial processes. An MCL is the maximum permissible level of a contaminant in water which is delivered to any user of a public water system. ***Some people who drink water containing PFAS6 in excess of the MCL may experience certain adverse effects. These could include effects on the liver, blood, immune system, thyroid, and fetal development. These PFAS6 may also elevate the risk of certain cancers.*** For more information on PFAS, see the links below.

What should I do?

For consumers in a sensitive subgroup (pregnant or nursing women, infants, and people diagnosed by their health care provider to have a compromised immune system)

- **Consumers in a sensitive subgroup are advised not to consume, drink, or cook with water when the level of PFAS6 is above 20 ng/L.**
- **Consumers in a sensitive subgroup** are advised to use bottled water for drinking and cooking of foods that absorb water (like pasta).
- **For infant formula**, use bottled water or use formula that does not require adding water.
- **Bottled water should only be used if it has been tested.** A list of companies that voluntarily tested their water for PFAS and shared the results can be found on MassDEP's website at:
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/bottled-water-tested-for-pfas>.

For all other consumers not in a sensitive subgroup

- **If you are not in a sensitive subgroup**, you may continue to consume the water because 20 ng/L value is applicable to a lifetime consuming the water and shorter duration exposures present less risk.
- **If you have specific health concerns regarding your past exposure**, you should see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) link below and consult a health professional, such as your doctor.

Steps you can take to reduce your intake - Consider taking the following steps while actions are being implemented to address this issue:

- **For older children and adults (not in a sensitive subgroup)**, the 20 ng/L value is applicable to a lifetime of consuming the water. For these groups, shorter duration exposures present less risk. However, if you are concerned about your exposure while steps are being taken to assess and lower the PFAS6 concentration in the drinking water, use of bottled water¹ will reduce your exposure.
- **In most situations, the water can be safely used for washing foods, brushing teeth, bathing, and showering.**

Please note: Boiling the water will not destroy PFAS6 and will somewhat increase its level due to evaporation of some of the water.

What is being done?

Our water system has taken the following pro-active measures:

- We are in the process of returning the Cross St. well to service to reduce water use from the Harbor Trace Well (Spring 2021).
- We are in the process of permitting a new source (Main St. Well) to replace the Harbor Trace Well (Spring 2022). After the Main St Well goes online, the Harbor Trace Well will be removed from service until treatment is installed.
- We will continue to sample all our water sources for PFAS.
- When additional information becomes available, this public notice will be updated.

Where can I get more information?

For more information, please contact David Vigeant at 978-597-2212, Dvigeant@Townsendwater.org 540 Main St Townsend Mass 01474.

We will provide public notice updates every three months until the situation has been resolved.

Additional information can be found in the **attached factsheet** and weblinks listed below.

- **MassDEP Fact Sheet – Questions and Answers for Consumers**
<https://www.mass.gov/media/1854351>
- **CDC ATSDR Information on PFAS for consumers and health professionals**
<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/index.html>
- **Massachusetts Department of Public Health information about PFAS in Drinking Water -**
<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas-in-drinking-water>

This notice is being sent to you by:

Town of Townsend

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Please share this information with other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses).