



Westford Water Department

Mark Warren, Interim Superintendent

Board of Water Commissioners:

Hugh C. Maguire

Titus Palmer

Chauncey Chu

Tim Hall, Alternate

DRINKING WATER PFAS6 PUBLIC EDUCATION

This material contains important information about your drinking water.

Please translate it, speak with someone who understands it or ask the contact listed below for a translation.

The Westford Water Department has not violated the drinking water regulations. A PFAS6 Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) violation occurs when the average of all monthly samples collected over a quarter exceeds the MCL. If our system had violated the PFAS6 MCL, our system would have issued a combined PUBLIC NOTICE and Public Education document.

On October 2, 2020, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) promulgated a new drinking water regulation and maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 20 nanograms per liter (ng/L) for the sum of six per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (called PFAS6). In addition, our water system proactively sampled for PFAS6 in August and October 2020 prior to the new regulations, which has been highlighted in our newsletters along with PFAS6 updates.

The Westford Water Department has found an elevated level of PFAS6 in the drinking water from the July sample at the Forge Village Water Treatment Plant (WTP) during routine monitoring. Even though the level detected in July is above the MCL, a PFAS6 MCL violation has not occurred, as violations are based on three months of testing. We are providing you with these materials to make you aware of the elevated levels so you can make informed decisions about your drinking water while we continue to monitor the water supply. See all of our latest results in the tables below.

PFAS6 Results for Forge Village Water Treatment Plant				
Quarterly Compliance Period	Monitoring Period	PFAS6 Result (ng/L)	*Quarterly Average (ng/L)	PFAS6 MCL (ng/L)
Quarter 2, 2021	April	12.7	15	20
	May	13.5		
	June	19.5		
Quarter 3, 2021	July	20.6	---	20
	August	---		
	September	---		

* Quarterly averages are calculated by adding the three-monthly sample results from within the quarter and dividing by three. If any sample result would cause the quarterly average to exceed the MCL, the PFAS6 MCL has been violated.

All results are in ng/L (ppt).

PFAS6 Results for Nutting Road Water Treatment Plant

Quarterly Compliance Period	Monitoring Period	PFAS6 Result (ng/L)	*Quarterly Average (ng/L)	PFAS6 MCL (ng/L)
Quarter 2, 2021	April	14.2	16	20
	May	17.4		
	June	16.1		
Quarter 3, 2021	July	17.8	---	20
	August	---		
	September	---		

* Quarterly averages are calculated by adding the three-monthly sample results from within the quarter and dividing by three. If any sample result would cause the quarterly average to exceed the MCL, the PFAS6 MCL has been violated.

All results are in ng/L (ppt).

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 is 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. For more information see the weblinks listed 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 (pregnant or nursing women, infants and people diagnosed by their health care provider to have a compromised immune system) are advised not to consume, drink, or cook with water when the level of PFAS6 is above 20 ng/L.**
- **Consumers in sensitive subgroups** 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.** The Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires companies licensed to sell or distribute bottled water or carbonated non-alcoholic beverages to test for PFAS. See <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/water-quality-standards-for-bottled-water-in-massachusetts#list-of-bottlers->

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 the 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 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 water will reduce your exposure.
- **Home water treatment systems** that are certified to remove PFAS by an independent testing group such as NSF, UL, or the Water Quality Association may be effective in treating the water. These may include point of entry systems, which treat all the water entering a home, or point of use devices, which treat water where it is used, such as at a faucet. For information on selecting home treatment devices that are effective in treating the water for PFAS6 see weblinks below.
- **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?

The Westford Water Department has taken the following proactive measures:

- We have sampled each of our 9 groundwater source wells/wellfields in July.
- The Country Road 2 well showed elevated PFAS6 levels, and we are currently investigating the source of PFAS6 contamination.
- We immediately removed the Country Road 2 well (which is one of five wells that supplies our Forge Village WTP) from service to reduce the PFAS6 levels in the finished water.
- We will continue monthly monitoring to gauge reduction of PFAS6 levels, and update our website with these results (www.westfordma.gov/water).
- We are investigating treatment options to remove PFAS6 should it become necessary.

Where can I get more information?

For more information, please contact Interim Superintendent Mark Warren at 978-399-2457 or at mwarren@westfordma.gov. See also the weblinks listed below.

- [MassDEP Fact Sheet - Questions and Answers for Consumers \(https://www.mass.gov/media/1854351\)](https://www.mass.gov/media/1854351)
- [MassDEP Fact Sheet - Home Water Treatment Devices - Point of Entry and Point of Use Drinking Water Treatment – \(https://www.mass.gov/service-details/home-water-treatment-devices-point-of-entry-and-point-of-use-drinking-water\)](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/home-water-treatment-devices-point-of-entry-and-point-of-use-drinking-water)

- [CDC ATSDR Information on PFAS for consumers and health professionals](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/index.html)
(<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)
<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas-in-drinking-water>

This public education material is being sent to you by:

Westford Water Department. PWS ID#: 3330000 Date distributed: 8/19/2021

We will provide public notice updates on our website (www.westfordma.gov/water.) every three months until the situation has been resolved.

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).

Rev. 2021-07