



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Town of Southwick

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Department of Public Works

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Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Testing

April 2, 2021

In October 2020, MassDEP promulgated a new drinking water standard in order to identify a newly prioritized family of chemicals called Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS). These regulations establish a Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 20 parts per trillion (ppt) for the sum of six PFAS compounds (PFOS, PFOA, PFHxS, PFNA, PFHpA and PFDA), collectively known as PFAS6. The regulations detail the sampling requirements and corrective actions that Public Water Systems must take when the MCL is exceeded, as well as the provisions for public education and notice of exceedances so that communities can be educated and proactive in protecting their drinking water quality.

The Southwick Water Department took initial samples for PFAS testing on March 9, 2021 from both production wells (Well 1 and Well 2). On March 26, 2021, the Water Department received the laboratory results. These results are posted on the Town website under Departments >>> Public Works >>> Water Division >>> PFAS Information.

The results for Well 1 show levels of PFAS at 4.93 ppt which is below the MCL standard of 20 ppt. The results for Well 1 and Well 2 also list trace amounts of some PFAS compounds below the Minimum Reporting Limit (MRL). The MRL is the lowest concentration that the substance can be tested and reported reliably under normal laboratory conditions. The Water Department is planning to collect confirmatory samples to verify these results in accordance with MassDEP policy. **At this time, no additional actions are required by the Water Department. The drinking water continues to meet or exceed all state and federal water quality standards.**

PFAS compounds are resilient and do not degrade easily. As a result, they are widely found in the environment as products are disposed of and PFAS leaches into the soil and water, finding its way to food and drinking water sources. Many PFAS compounds have previously been used in common products such as stain repellants, nonstick cookware, waterproof clothing, water resistant food wrappers and containers, and many other household products. PFAS may also be found in areas impacted by prior use of industrial products such as fire-suppressing foams. Most uses of PFAS compounds were phased out decades ago by US manufacturers; however they may still be used in some imported products.

The Southwick Water Department has a mission to deliver clean and reliable water. Given the emerging concerns about PFAS across the country, the Water Department will continue to share information about PFAS with the community. Future laboratory results will be posted on the Town's website and public outreach and education efforts will be provided when appropriate.

If you wish to learn more about PFAS, visit www.safewatermass.org, a website developed by the Massachusetts Water Works Association to provide information and links to reliable sources of information. Additional details can also be found on the MassDEP website at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>.

If you have any questions, please contact the DPW office at 413-569-6772.

Sincerely,

Randal Brown, P.E.
DPW Director