

City of Woburn, Massachusetts

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 City of Woburn has not violated the drinking water regulations. A PFAS6 MCL violation occurs when the average of all monthly samples collected over a quarter exceeds the MCL. If our system had violated the PFAS6 Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) our system would have issued a PUBLIC NOTICE.

On October 2, 2020, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) promulgated a new drinking water regulation and MCL of 20 nanograms per liter (ng/L) for the sum of six per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (called PFAS6). The City of Woburn has confirmed elevated levels of PFAS6 in the drinking water during routine monitoring. Even though the PFAS6 levels in the months of October and November 2023, are above the MCL, a PFAS6 MCL violation has not occurred, as violations are based on three months of testing. Instead, we are providing you with these educational 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.

PFAS6 Results for Horn Pond Water Treatment Plant					
Quarterly Compliance Period	Monitoring Period	Sample Collection Date	PFAS6 Result (ng/L)*	Monthly Average PFAS6 Level (ng/L)*	PFAS6 MCL (ng/L)*
Quarter 4, 2023	October	10/5/2023	22.4	23	20
	October Confirmation	10/20/2023	23.4		
	November	11/8/2023	21.5	22	
	November Confirmation	11/29/2023	23.1		

The Quarter 4 average will be calculated by first averaging the results of the two samples in each month to obtain the monthly average for October and November, and then using those average values along with the forthcoming December results to calculate the average for the quarter.

**For reference, a nanogram per liter (ng/L) is the same as a “part per trillion” or “ppt” and is a microscopic measurement for substances in the water and is equivalent to a single drop of water in the combined water volume of 20 Olympic size swimming pools.*

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, please 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 human-made chemicals that have been used in the manufacturing of certain fire-fighting

foams, moisture and stain resistant products, and other industrial processes. Many PFAS compounds were used in common consumer products such as stain repellants, nonstick cookware, waterproof clothing, water-resistant food wrappers and containers, and many others. 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 City has taken several actions to address the PFAS6 levels in the drinking water and their impacts, as follows:

- A free water bottle filling station is available at the Senior Center on School Street.

- For people considered in a sensitive population (see above) who must purchase bottled water, the City will issue a monthly rebate for the water bill to be issued in February 2024 for the billing period of July 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2023. The rebate will be available for those periods we are above the DEP drinking water standard of 20 ppt. The rebate program will open in early 2024 for qualifying residents after semiannual water bills are issued for the 7/1/23 – 12/31/23 billing period.
- We are upgrading our water treatment plant to treat and remove PFAS6. The design was submitted to MassDEP for approval on September 29, 2023 and MassDEP's review is underway.

The City qualified to receive from the Massachusetts Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) loan program a 0% interest loan to fund upgrades to our Horn Pond Water Treatment Plant. Due to its priority ranking, the City's construction project was 1 of 39 out of 114 proposed projects to be offered DWSRF financing during the calendar year 2023 Intended Use Plan financing cycle. The DWSRF is a joint federal/state loan program that will allow the City to borrow funds at 0% interest rate for this PFAS-mitigation project. As a tier 1 Disadvantaged Community, the City is eligible to receive an additional 6.6% in principal forgiveness for a portion of the project. The City submitted the loan application package to MassDEP on October 13, 2023 and received conditional project approval certification on December 6, 2023.

Where can I get more information?

For more information, please contact Anthony Blazejowski, 5 Cove St. Woburn, MA, 01801, 781-897-5945 or email: ablazejowski@cityofwoburn.com

See also the weblinks listed below.

- **MassDEP Fact Sheet - Questions and Answers for Consumers**
<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>
- **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 public education material is being sent to you by:

PWS Name: City of Woburn Water Department

PWS ID#: 3347000

Date distributed: December 13, 2023

Please share this information with all the 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). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.