



## 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.*

### Elevated Disinfection Byproducts at Chester Water Department

Our water system exceeded a drinking water standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for haloacetic acids (HAA5) during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2023. HAA5 are a type of disinfection byproduct (DBP) formed during the treatment process.

Compliance with the standard is based on comparing the MCL with the average of the concentrations in all samples collected at each sampling location for the past 12 months (the Locational Running Annual Average, LRAA). The standard for HAA5 is 60 micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ , or parts per billion, ppb)]<sup>1</sup>.

Testing results came from routine monitoring of drinking water contaminants from August 17, 2022 to May 15, 2023. Due to a lack of timely DBP sampling for 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2022, the current LRAA included samples from three quarters instead of from four quarters. The level of HAA5 at our system's 191 Huntington Road location averaged 87  $\mu\text{g/L}$ , above the standard limit of 60  $\mu\text{g/L}$ .

#### What does this mean?

**This is not an emergency.** If it had been an emergency, you would have been notified within 24 hours.

Chlorine is added to drinking water sources to disinfect drinking water. The chlorine can interact with natural organic material in the water to form DBPs.

*Some people who drink water containing haloacetic acids in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.*

In addition, young children (including infants), pregnant women or those who may become pregnant may be potentially more susceptible to risks from exposures to chemicals, such as HAA5.

#### What is Being Done?

We are conducting the evaluations of our treatment process and distribution system as required by MassDEP. We will also conduct more water quality monitoring to assess the source water quality and treatment processes. We are using past and current data to evaluate the cause(s) of elevated levels and

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<sup>1</sup>  $\mu\text{g/L} = \text{mg/L} / 1000$

potential corrective actions, such as improvements in our treatment system. We will work with the MassDEP throughout this process.

For more information, contact your Water Commission via phone 413-262-1541 or e-mail [water@townofchester.net](mailto:water@townofchester.net).

## **What should I do?**

You can choose to limit the amount of tap water used if you are pregnant, may become pregnant or are giving water to young children. For example, you can use water from another source, such as bottled water.

While breast milk can be a source of HAA5 exposure for infants, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that nursing mothers continue to breastfeed their babies because of the numerous protective health benefits, despite the potential presence of environmental contaminants. You can also use home water filters to reduce exposures. (See MassDEP's HAA5 in Drinking Water. Information for Consumer Fact Sheet at: <https://www.mass.gov/media/2532591/download>).

If you have questions about your water system's operation, water quality monitoring, or response to this issue, please contact the system's operator directly. If you have questions about the drinking water regulations or health risks posed by these contaminants<sup>2</sup>, you can contact the MassDEP Drinking Water Program at: [program.director-dwp@mass.gov](mailto:program.director-dwp@mass.gov) or (617) 292-5770. If you have questions about specific symptoms, you can contact your doctor or other health care provider. If you have general questions about your health, you can contact the Massachusetts Department of Public Health at 617-624-5757. Further information is available in MassDEP's HAA5 in Drinking Water Information for Consumers Fact Sheet at: <https://www.mass.gov/media/2532591/download>.

*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.*

This notice is being sent to you by the Chester Water Department. PWS ID#: 1059000

Date distributed: 22 June 2023.

Phone: 413-354-7760 Email: [water@townofchester.net](mailto:water@townofchester.net)

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.mass.gov/doc/supporting-documentation-for-drinking-water-standards-and-guidelines/download>



## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER** **Monitoring Requirements Not Met for Chester Water Department**

Our water system violated a drinking water standard for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2022. Even though this was not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we did to correct these situations.

*We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not our drinking water meets health standards. During the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2022 we collected the quarterly TTHM/HAA5 sample outside of the required sampling period and therefore cannot be sure of the quality of our drinking water during that time.*

### **What should I do?**

There is nothing you need to do at this time.

The table below lists the contaminants we did not properly test for during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2022, how often we are supposed to sample for these contaminants, and how many samples we are supposed to take, how many samples we took, when samples should have been taken, and the date on which follow-up samples were taken.

<b>Contaminant</b>	<b>Required sampling frequency</b>	<b>Number of samples taken</b>	<b>When all samples should have been taken</b>	<b>When samples were taken</b>
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM)	1 sample every quarter in the third week of the designated month	0	Third week of November	Fourth week of November
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)	1 sample every quarter in the third quarter of the designated month	0	Third week of November	Fourth week of November

### **What happened? What is being done?**

The water operator believed the required samples were being taken by an outside firm. Although the outside firm was conducting sampling for the Chester Water Department, the quarterly TTHM and HAA5 samples were not included as part of their sampling requirements. Once the error was identified, the water operator took the samples, but it was outside the required sampling window.

To correct this, the outside firm was hired to take this quarterly sample going forward. Also, the DEP water quality sampling plan was reviewed with the water operator and the plan was posted at the operator work station. A monthly calendar was also posted with all sampling requirements, for both the outside firm and the water operator, with their sampling frequency, at the operator work station.

For more information, please contact the Town Administrator at 413-354-7760 or 15 Middlefield Rd., Chester MA 01011 or [water@townofchester.net](mailto:water@townofchester.net).

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