



## 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

Your water system exceeded a drinking water standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for some water disinfection byproducts (DBPs). Testing results came from routine monitoring of drinking water contaminants from May 15, 2023, to February 21, 2024. Compliance is determined by averaging the concentrations in all samples collected at each sampling location for the past 12 months (the Locational Running Annual Average, LRAA).

The level of Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) averaged at our system's 191 Huntington Rd was 90 micrograms per liter or  $\mu\text{g/L}$  (ppb)<sup>1</sup>. The standard is 60  $\mu\text{g/L}$  for HAA5.

The level of Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) averaged at our system's 381 Huntington Rd was 89  $\mu\text{g/L}$  and at 191 Huntington Road was 90  $\mu\text{g/L}$ . The standard is 80  $\mu\text{g/L}$  for TTHM.

#### What does this mean?

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

Disinfectants added to drinking water sources can interact with natural 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.*

*Some people who drink water containing trihalomethanes in excess of the MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous system, and 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 THMs and HAAs.

#### 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

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

treatment processes. We are using past and current data to evaluate the cause(s) of elevated levels and potential corrective actions, such as improvements in our treatment system. We will work with the MassDEP throughout this process. Chester recently received authorization from MassDEP to switch source waters to Austin Brook Reservoir where the total organic carbon (TOC) is typically lower than in Horn Pond. The organic material is a precursor to THM and HAA formation.

For more information, contact your Water Commission at Phone 413-354-6365 & Email [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 *or* for TTHM let water sit in a pitcher overnight to allow the TTHM chemicals to leave the water. Most TTHM are volatile and will easily evaporate from the water at room temperature.

While breast milk can be a source of THM and HAA 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 and TTHM in Drinking Water Information for Consumers (<https://www.mass.gov/media/2532606/download>))

If you have questions about your water system's operation, water quality monitoring, or response to this issue, please contact the system operator directly. If you have questions about the drinking water regulations or health risks posed by these contaminants, you can contact the MassDEP Drinking Water Program at: [program.director-dwp@mass.gov](mailto:program.director-dwp@mass.gov). 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 [1-617-624-5757](tel:1-617-624-5757). Further information is available in Fact Sheets for TTHM or HAA5 referenced above as "Information for Consumers".

*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 Chester Water Department. PWS ID#: 1059000 Date distributed: 03/28/2024.

Phone: 413-354-6365 Email: [water@townofchester.net](mailto:water@townofchester.net)