



## 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 a water disinfection byproduct (DBP). Testing results came from routine monitoring of drinking water contaminants from November 13, 2023, to August 14, 2024.

The level of haloacetic acids (HAA5) averaged at our system's 191 Huntington Rd location was 63 micrograms per liter or  $\mu\text{g/L}$  (ppb)<sup>1</sup>. The standard is 60  $\mu\text{g/L}$  for HAA5.

The system concentrations are determined by averaging their concentrations in all samples collected at each sampling location for the past 12 months.

#### 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 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 continue to use past and current data to evaluate the cause(s) of elevated DBP levels and potential corrective actions, such as improvements in our treatment system, and we work with the MassDEP throughout this process. Using a grant from MassDEP, Chester was able to recently install in two of the

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

filters new sand along with a layer of granular activated carbon (GAC) in each filter which will remove organic material from the water that serves as precursors to DBPs. The third filter bed was also resanded.

For more information, contact your Water Commission at Phone 413-354-7760 & 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 Center 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 Chester Water Department. PWS ID#: 1059000 Date distributed: 09/19/2024.

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

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