

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

## The Norwell Water System has levels of PFAS6 above the Drinking Water Standard

*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.*

### What happened?

Our water system violated a drinking water standard for the sum of six per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances known as PFAS6, at the South Street Treatment Plant and we are taking the following corrective actions: We have contracted with an engineering firm to design and install treatment to remove PFAS and in the interim a self-service bottle filling station was installed at 79 Grove Street to provide residents with drinking water with PFAS6 levels below the drinking water standard.

### What does this mean?

**This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified within 24 hours.** Although this is not an emergency, as our customer, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we did and are doing to correct this situation.

On October 2, 2020, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) promulgated a new drinking water regulation and maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 20 nanograms per liter (ng/L) for PFAS6. See our latest results for samples collected from the South Street Treatment Plant in the table below.

PFAS6 Results for South Street Treatment Plant					
Quarterly Compliance Period	Monitoring Period	Sample Collection Date	PFAS6 Result (ng/L)	Quarterly Average (ng/L)	PFAS6 MCL (ng/L)
Quarter 4, 2023	Month 1	10/30/2023	38.6	22	20
	Month 2	11/30/2023	7.7		
	Month 3	12/27/2023	18.6		

The results from the South Street Treatment Plant are above the MCL for PFAS6 for Quarter 4, of 2023. A PFAS6 MCL violation occurs when the quarterly average of samples collected exceeds 20 ng/L. Even though we have been notifying you of our results since we began collecting samples, to comply with the drinking water regulation, we must provide you with this Public Notice. The water from the South Street Treatment Plant is one of three entrance points that supplies drinking water to our distribution system. Results from the two other locations, Grove Street and Washington Street, did not exceed the MCL.

*Some people who drink water containing PFAS6 in excess of the drinking water standard or Maximum Contaminant Level (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, see the links listed 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 man-made chemicals that have been used in the manufacturing of certain fire-fighting foams, moisture and stain resistant products, and other industrial processes. For more information see the weblinks listed below.

### What do I need to do?

- **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 or water from the self-serve bottle filling station for drinking and cooking of foods that absorb water (like pasta).
- **For infant formula**, use bottled water/water from the self-serve bottle filling station or use formula that does not require adding water.

- **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 PFAS concentration in the drinking water, use of bottled water will reduce your exposure.
- **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->
- **Home water treatment systems** that are certified to remove PFAS by an independent testing group such as NSF, UL, or Water Quality Association may be used to treat 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, review the MassDEP factsheet for consumers referenced below.
- **In most situations the water can be safely used for washing foods, brushing teeth, bathing, and showering.**
- **Boiling the water will not destroy PFAS6** and will somewhat increase its level due to evaporation of some of the water.
- **If you have specific health concerns regarding exposure, you should see the Centers for Disease Control's link below and consult a health professional, such as your doctor.**

For more information see the MassDEP Fact Sheet and weblinks listed below.

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

The Norwell Water Department has taken the following proactive measures:

- Well 1 was taken off line in October after peak water demand season. It will not be used in a regular capacity until startup and testing of the new South Street Treatment plant is completed.
- A bottle filling station has been installed at 79 Grove Street to provide residents with drinking water with PFAS6 levels below the drinking water standard.
- We are working with the MassDEP Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup, collecting samples at various monitoring wells near impacted drinking water wells. This work is being done in hopes of identifying the source of the PFAS.
- Individual wells/sources are being monitored for PFAS6.

### ***Where can I get more information?***

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 this contaminant 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 public health, you can contact the Massachusetts Department of Public Health at 1-617-624-5757.

For more information, please visit the Water Department webpage: <https://www.townofnorwell.net/water-department-0> or contact Jason Federico at 781-659-8076 or at [jfederico@townofnorwell.net](mailto:jfederico@townofnorwell.net) Norwell Water Department, 345 Main Street, Norwell, MA 02061.

See also the weblinks listed below:

- [MassDEP Fact Sheet - Questions and Answers for Consumers](https://www.mass.gov/media/1854351) <https://www.mass.gov/media/1854351>
- [CDC ATSDR Information on PFAS for consumers and health professionals](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/index.html) <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) - <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas-in-drinking-water>
- [Environmental Protection Agency](https://www.epa.gov/pfas) - <https://www.epa.gov/pfas>

This public notification material is being sent to you by:

Norwell Water Department.

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We will provide public notice updates every three months until the situation has been resolved.

*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.*