



AGAWAM WATER DEPARTMENT • PWS ID#: 1005000
IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER



Haloacetic Acid 5 (HAA5) MCL Violation in Agawam

The Agawam Water Department (PWS ID#: 1005000) recently violated a drinking water standard. Although this incident was not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Testing results from samples taken on June 4, 2019 show that our system exceeded the standard or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for HAA5 at one of our four locations, 1057 North Westfield Street. The standard for HAA5 is 60 micrograms per liter (µg/L), also known as parts per billion (ppb). It is determined by averaging all samples collected by our system for the last 12 months, this is also known as a locational running annual average (LRAA). The level of HAA5 average at this location for the July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 monitoring period was 69 µg/L; with a range for the last 12 month period of 51-110 µg/L. Our most recent sample results were 59 µg/L, which is below the standard of 60 µg/L, but because the drinking water standard is an average (LRAA) over the past year at that location, we remain in violation of the MCL for HAA5. The other three sampling locations, deeper into the water system, all have LRAAs below the MCL.

What does this mean?

You are advised that the water can continue to be consumed as usual. This is not an emergency, and there was no immediate or short-term health risks. If it had been an emergency, you would have been notified within 24 hours. HAA5 are five haloacetic acid compounds which form when disinfectants react with natural organic matter in the water. *People who drink water containing HAA5s in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.*

Please see <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/haa5-in-drinking-water-information-for-consumers> for a fact sheet on HAA5s or visit our website at <http://www.agawam.ma.us/water/haa5> for more information

What should I do?

There is nothing you need to do. You do not need to boil your water, drink bottled water, use a filter or take other corrective actions. If a situation arises where the water is no longer safe to drink, you will be notified within 24 hours.

If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water.

Why did this happen:

The higher than normal rainfall in 2018 resulted in a 50 percent increase in the amount of dissolved natural organic matter (NOM) in Cobble Mountain Reservoir, which is the main source of Agawam’s drinking water. The increased amount of dissolved NOM interacting with the necessary disinfectant levels has resulted in higher than typical HAA5 levels in the treated water provided by SWSC to Agawam. Although the levels of dissolved NOM are decreasing, they are still elevated.

Sample Location	June 4, 2019 Q2-19 Results (µg/L)	Locational Running Annual Average (LRAA) (µg/L)	Values in LRAA (µg/L) (Q3-18, Q4-18, Q1-19, & Q2-19)
1057 No. Westfield Street	59	69	56, 110, 51, & 59

What is being done?

We are working closely with our water supplier at the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission (SWSC). They have modified the existing treatment process to reduce the levels of HAA5 in the distribution system while maintaining safe chlorine levels. A return to more normal precipitation patterns in 2019 could also reduce the amount of NOM in the raw water and in turn a reduction in HAA5.

A comprehensive facilities improvement plan for West Parish Filters Water Treatment Plant is also underway. The plan is analyzing various long-term treatment process upgrades to more effectively treat organic matter and reduce HAA5. A pilot study of differing treatment systems to determine the most effective technologies for removal of organic matter is underway and will be completed in 2019-2020. This study will help to determine the necessary investment to address long term water quality issues including HAA5. The SWSC also has a Source Water Protection Plan that identifies land management tools to optimize raw water quality. SWSC states it continuously explores and implements ways to optimize raw water quality.

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.

For more information, please contact DPW Deputy Superintendent John Decker at (413) 821-0600 or at water@agawam.ma.us.