



**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 December 4, 2019 show that our system exceeded the standard or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for HAA5 at two of our four locations, 1057 North Westfield Street and 36 Main 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 following table has the HAA5 results for the two locations for the January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019 monitoring period:

Sample Location	LRAA Q4/2019	Readings in LRAA (Q1-19, Q2-19, Q3-19, Q4-19)	Most Recent Sample Result
1057 N. Westfield St.	61 µg/L	51, 59, 67, & 66 µg/L	66 µg/L
36 Main St.	61 µg/L	56, 52, 69, & 65 µg/L	65 µg/L

The other two sampling locations continue to 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 are 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 (i.e. decades or a lifetime) 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. We also believe that a fire flow test that preceded the Q3/2019 sampling may have contributed to the elevated HAA5 readings at 36 Main Street. In support of this theory, the chlorine residual reading for the DBPs was approximately 80% higher than the average of readings when bacteria samples were taken before and after the disinfection byproduct sampling.

**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. Though NOM has decreased from its highest levels in 2018, SWSC continues to see elevated NOM in the raw water.

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 remove dissolved NOM and reduce HAA5. A pilot study of differing treatment processes to determine the most effective technologies for removal of organic matter commenced in September and will be completed in 2020. This study will help determine the necessary upgrades to make to the treatment plant to address long-term water quality issues including HAA5. A new enhanced sampling program underway in the reservoirs will also inform the water treatment plant upgrades. Additionally, the SWSC 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. We also continue to investigate options for us to improve 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 Deputy Superintendent John Decker at (413) 821-0600 or at [water@agawam.ma.us](mailto:water@agawam.ma.us) .

Agawam Department of Public Works  
Agawam Water Department  
1000 Sutfeld Street  
Agawam, MA 01001



# Prevent Winter Runoff Pollution

## ***Did you Know?***

***During the winter months, stormwater runoff begins in the form of snow and ice. When the temperatures warm up, the snow and ice melt, creating stormwater runoff. Snow melt combined with rain can overwhelm the drainage system, especially if the ground hasn't yet thawed, preventing the water from infiltrating down in to the soil.***

## **Winter Best Management Practices**

- **Snow and Ice Removal:** Shovel or snow-blow whenever possible to prevent compaction. The more you remove by shoveling or snow-blowing, the less ice you will have later to deal with.
- **Salt Application:** Follow manufacturer's instructions. Salt does not melt ice below 15 degrees. Do not over apply, apply on vegetation, or near waterways. Choose a more environmentally-friendly alternative when possible.
- **Sand Application:** Use only enough to provide traction on slippery areas. Sweep up excess sand as soon as weather conditions allow.
- **Snow and Ice Disposal:** Do not dispose of snow or ice on top of storm drains or near water bodies and wetland areas. Doing this helps allow water to drain as it melts instead of overwhelming the system.

*Accompanying the winter runoff are months of debris and waste trapped in the snow and ice.*

- ◆ *Clear storm drains of yard waste debris.*
- ◆ *Pick up pet waste.*
- ◆ *Use a trash receptacle for cigarette butts and litter.*
- ◆ *Properly dispose of Household Chemicals at a recycling center.*

**Cigarette  
Butts  
Are LITTER  
too...**

