



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 September 1, 2021 show that our system exceeded the standard or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for HAA5 at one of our four locations, 36 Main Street. The standard for HAA5 is 60 micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$), 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 LRAA of HAA5 for the 36 Main Street sampling location for the October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021 monitoring period was $63\mu\text{g/L}$. The range of values at this location was 47 to $84\mu\text{g/L}$. The other three 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?

This is NOT an emergency. 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 watershed area has received well above normal rainfall in recent months, which has resulted in an increase in the dissolved natural organic matter (NOM) entering the reservoir. Because of this, our water supplier the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission (SWSC) staff has had to increase the chlorine output due to increased chlorine demand. We are evaluating options to respond to reduce the formation of HAA5 in our water and continue to work with MassDEP and SWSC on this response.

What is being done?

We are working with the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission (SWSC), which treats the drinking water, continue to advance our efforts on a long-term solution. SWSC has modified its existing treatment process and system operations to reduce the levels of HAA5 in the distribution system as much as possible while maintaining safe chlorine levels and determining long-term solutions.

A pilot study was completed between Fall 2019 and Fall 2020 to determine the most effective treatment process to remove more dissolved NOM and reduce HAA5. Results from the pilot study will inform the design of permanent treatment plant upgrades necessary to reduce disinfection byproducts, including HAA5.

The design of the permanent treatment plant upgrades is scheduled to begin later this year. After the design is approved by MassDEP, construction will begin in FY24 at an estimated cost of \$168 million. The project is being financed with support from the U.S. Environmental Agency's (EPA) Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA).

SWSC is accelerating this work as quickly as possible while committing significant resources to the process. The pilot study and half-plant trial built upon an already ongoing comprehensive evaluation of water quality and the water treatment process that began four years prior. A panel of national experts convened by SWSC is guiding these activities. SWSC also regularly implements land management tools according to its Source Water Protection Plan 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 Deputy Superintendent John Decker at (413) 821-0600 or at water@agawam.ma.us.

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



Did you Know?

The combination of rainfall with leaves on our driveways, sidewalks, streets, and parking lots can produce stormflows into local rivers, streams, and lakes that are loaded with nutrients that cause harm to

The most effective way to reduce stormwater pollution is to stop the pollutants from entering the system in the first place.

- Compost your yard waste
- Direct downspouts away from paved surfaces
- Watch the weather! Fast release fertilizers should not be applied before a heavy rainfall.
- Never dump anything down storm drains

Fertilizer is available in slow-release or fast –release form. Fast release fertilizer releases the nitrogen almost immediately into the soil. Slow release fertilizer is a more controlled release of the nitrogen, which can reduce the chance of nutrients leaching into groundwater in areas such as sandy soils.

Residential Leaf Disposal Options

Curbside Collection: Residents will receive four fall collections as identified on their route schedule.

Bondi's Island Drop-off: Residents are required to obtain yard waste passes at the DPW office prior to dropping off yard waste.

For more detailed information regarding curbside and drop off regulations, please visit www.agawam.ma.us