



AGAWAM WATER DEPARTMENT • PWS ID# 1005000
IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER
Haloacetic Acid 5 (HAA5) MCL Violation in Agawam



The Agawam Water Department (AWD) (PWS ID# 1005000) recently violated a drinking water standard. Although this incident is 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 6, 2022 show that our system exceeded the standard or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for haloacetic acids (HAA5) at three locations: 36 Main Street, 1057 North Westfield Street, and 1200 Springfield Street. The MCL for HAA5 is 60 micrograms per liter (µg/L). The MCLs are 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 table below shows the LRAA for each location above the MCL for HAA5 for the October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022 monitoring period:

Note: Agawam has also exceeded the HAA5 MCL in 2018, 2019, 2021, & 2022.

Sample Location	MCL	LRAA Q3/22	Readings in LRAA (Q4/21, Q1/22, Q2/22, Q3/22)	Most Recent Sample Result
36 Main St.	60 µg/L (HAA5)	72 µg/L	67, 100, 69, & 51 µg/L	51 µg/L
1057 N. Westfield St.	60 µg/L (HAA5)	64 µg/L	69, 101, 36, & 51 µg/L	51 µg/L
1200 Springfield St.	60 µg/L (HAA5)	71 µg/L	76, 99, 67, & 40 µg/L	40 µg/L

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been an emergency, you would have been notified within 24 hours.

HAA5 are five haloacetic acid compounds form when a disinfectant (chlorine) reacts with dissolved natural organic matter (NOM) in the water. Because these compounds (HAA5) are formed during the disinfection process they are known collectively as disinfection by-products (DBP).

Each MCL is based on the potential cancer risks associated with drinking water with elevated levels of DBPs over a lifetime. *Some people who drink water containing haloacetic acids in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.*

What should I do?

- **There is nothing you need to do. You DO NOT need to boil your water 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.
- However, 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.

For more information about DBPs, please visit the following links: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/haa5-in-drinking-water-information-for-consumers>.

Why did this happen?

The Springfield Water and Sewer Commission (SWSC) supplies treated drinking water to the Agawam Water Department. DBPs form when dissolved natural organic matter (NOM) interacts with chlorine. The amount of chlorine necessary to maintain safe disinfection is determined by the amount and types of dissolved NOM in Cobble Mountain Reservoir, the main source of the drinking water supply.

Extreme weather patterns (caused by current climate conditions) can impact raw water quality and the amount and types of NOM in Cobble Mountain Reservoir. The higher-than-average rainfall in summer 2021, including rainfall from two hurricanes, has resulted in an increase in the amount of dissolved NOM in Cobble Mountain Reservoir that continues to impact raw water quality. In addition, the SWSC’s existing West Parish Filters Water Treatment Plant was last modernized in 1974 and is not capable of removing the current levels of NOM to the extent necessary to meet DBP regulations. Therefore, the increased NOM and necessary chlorine dosages resulted in elevated HAA5 levels in the distribution system. We continue to evaluate 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 SWSC, which treats the drinking water, to continue to advance our efforts on a long-term solution. To reduce the formation of DBPs in the distribution system, SWSC continues to adjust the existing treatment process to maximize NOM removal. As a permanent solution, the SWSC has begun rapidly advancing the design of a new drinking water treatment plant.

Design and construction of a new treatment plant will ensure that the plant will meet 21st century standards for regulatory compliance, water quality, and reliability. Until the new treatment plant is fully online, the AWD expects there will continue to be exceedances of the MCL for DBPs. Customers will receive notification any time there is an exceedance.

Progress of West Parish Filters Water Treatment Plant Upgrades:

- Design of the new water treatment plant is underway and on schedule. Construction of the new treatment plant is scheduled to start in 2024 and expected to be complete by December 2027.
- Phase 1 construction of other important plant upgrades began in December 2021.
- SWSC is advancing all plant upgrades on an accelerated schedule.

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

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.

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



Fall is upon us, and that means leaf litter season! In the fall, dead leaves typically collect in roadways, and in moderate rainfall events can be washed into/on top of storm drains. These decaying organic materials are a major source of nitrogen and phosphorus in urban stormwater, contributing to excessive richness of nutrient issues downstream. The increase of nitrogen and phosphorus may cause harm to our water resources, such as potentially-toxic algae blooms. Proper use or disposal of yard waste will help to avoid these contaminated flows.

Bag It, Don't Blow It!

- Never blow leaves or grass clippings from your yard into streets, sidewalks or storm drains.
- Street sweeping services are designed to handle natural leaf and debris removal on public streets. Leaves and grass clippings blown in the streets disrupt the efficiency of the street sweeping process.
- Bag leaves and yard waste for the town's curbside collection program.

Compost It, Don't Blow It!

- Fall leaves are an important ingredient to a compost pile. Without them, a compost pile may become too wet and create odors.
- Layer compost piles with equal parts brown (dry leaves) to green (food waste/grass clippings) materials. It's the mixture of the two, the carbon to nitrogen ratio, that activates hard working soil microbes.

Mulch It, Don't Blow It!

- Turn your yard waste into mulch and leave it on the ground. Yard waste acts as a natural fertilizer.

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 have an Agawam ID showing proof of residency at the time of drop off.

No dump trucks, commercial or business vehicles will be allowed.

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