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 December 1, 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 January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022 monitoring period:
Note: Agawam has also exceeded the HAA5 MCL in 2018, 2019, 2021, & 2022.

Sample Location	MCL	LRAA Q4/22	Readings in LRAA (Q1/22, Q2/22, Q3/22, Q4/22)	Most Recent Sample Result
36 Main St.	**60 µg/L (HAA5)**	70 µg/L	100, 69, 51,& 60 µg/L	60 µg/L
1057 N. Westfield St.	**60 µg/L (HAA5)**	61 µg/L	101, 36, 51,& 55 µg/L	55 µg/L
1200 Springfield St.	**60 µg/L (HAA5)**	65 µg/L	99, 67, 40,& 54 µg/L	54 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/media/2532591/download

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 or https://www.mass.gov/media/2532591/download

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.

This notice is being sent to you by:	PWS ID#:	Date distributed:
Agawam Water Department	1005000	December 29, 2022

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

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

THINK SMALL DOESN'T MATTER?

LITTLE THINGS ADD UP.

Help keep our waters clean…
put your nip in the trash.

While miniature in size, plastic nip bottles are creating monumental problems. Often tossed out of car windows, nip bottles accumulate along roadways and wash with the next rainfall or snowmelt into nearby rivers and streams. The Connecticut River Conservancy's Source to Sea Clean Up has collected more than 16,566 of these small plastic bottles over the past 5 years. Local citizen efforts in Agawam, Easthampton, and other locations have also collected thousands of littered nip bottles.

In more urban locations, discarded nip bottles are carried by flows into nearby storm drains. Public works officials in the Pioneer Valley region indicate that roadside storm drains in certain locations regularly fill with nip bottles.

Plastic litter in any form is a problem for cities and towns. Storm pipes can get clogged and local waterways become polluted. The Connecticut River Conservancy website notes, "When plastic enters the river, it breaks up into tiny pieces, but never fully degrades. As a result, our waterways become polluted with large quantities of what is known as "microplastic." Over time, these particles make their way to the large floating garbage patches in our oceans. Along the way, wildlife may become entangled in it or try to eat it, which can lead to death."

The fix is simple. Toss nip bottles into the trash bin.

Note that given their small size, nip bottles are not recyclable in Massachusetts as they jam sorting machinery.