Town of Foxborough PFAS Public Notification

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

The Town of Foxborough through voluntarily sampling has discovered the presence of PFAS in our water supply. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) has recommended that we share this information with our residents. The Town of Foxborough’s active water supplies meet the current guidelines.

PFAS are not currently regulated by MassDEP or the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and at this time public water suppliers are not required to test for PFAS. In May 2016, the EPA issued a lifetime Health Advisory (HA) of 70 parts per trillion (0.07 ug/L) for the combination of two PFAS chemicals, PFOS and PFOA, in drinking water. In 2018, MassDEP issued a more stringent drinking water guideline of 70 parts per trillion (ppt) for five combined PFAS compounds. MassDEP's Office of Research and Standards Guideline currently recommends consumers in sensitive subgroups (pregnant women, nursing mothers and infants) not consume water with PFAS levels above 70 ppt. However, in January 2019 MassDEP announced they would study and likely set a standard Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for PFAS for drinking water providers. In spring 2019 they established 20 ppt for the sum of six PFAS compounds as their planned MCL.

On August 30th and October 28th, the Water Department sampled at the points where treated water enters the distribution system for the town (entry points). Results varied from 8.2 ppt to 28.1 ppt. All of the town’s active entry points are below the planned 20 ppt MCL and are below the current 70 ppt Health Advisories. The PFAS concentration in Well 12, an active, emergency source, meet the current Drinking Water Guideline of 70 ppt and is slightly above the proposed 20 ppt limit under consideration by MassDEP. Well 12 was removed from service on August 31, 2019. The Water Department will evaluate treatment options before returning Well 12 to service. The Water Department will continue to monitor the water quality relating to PFAS.

***What are PFAS and how are people exposed to them?***

PFAS are fluorinated organic chemicals. Two PFAS chemicals, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) have been the most extensively produced and studied of these chemicals. PFAS are contained in firefighting foams, which have been used in training exercises and to extinguish oil and gas fires at a variety of locations including airfields and military installations. PFAS are also used in several industrial processes and have been used to manufacture carpets, clothing, fabrics for furniture, paper packaging for food and other materials (e.g., nonstick cookware) that are resistant to water, grease or stains. Because these chemicals have been used in many consumer products, most people have been exposed to them.

While consumer products and food are the largest source of exposure to these chemicals for most people, drinking water can be an additional source of exposure in communities where these chemicals have contaminated water supplies. Such contamination is typically localized and associated with a specific facility, for example, an airfield at which they were used for firefighting or a facility where these chemicals were produced or used.

***What can I do to further reduce my exposure from drinking water?***

The Foxborough drinking water meets the current and proposed guidelines and standards. No action is required by our consumers.

***Where can I get more information?***

For more information, please contact Robert Worthley at 508-543-1209 or by mail at Foxborough Water Department, 70 Elm Street, Foxborough, MA 02035.

You can also get more information on PFAS from the following sources:

• MassDEP Fact Sheet – PFAS in Drinking Water: Questions and Answers for Consumers: <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2019/04/17/pfas-in-dw-fs.pdf>

• USEPA’s Drinking Water Health Advisories can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/drinking-water-health-advisories-pfoa-and-pfos>

• The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Public Health Statement for PFOS and PFOA can be found at: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/>

* [The AWWA Briefing on PFAS](http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/98237293:TJ54C5uhN:m:1:3151876054:9336265AFCEBFBA1AFE708F6AC7B37BB:r)

For additional information on possible health effects, you may contact the Massachusetts Department Environmental Protection, Office of Research and Standards, at 617-556-1165.

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