



**SPRINGFIELD WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION  
P.O. BOX 995, SPRINGFIELD, MA 01101**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Response to Media Reports About Drinking Water Quality from the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission**

The Springfield Water and Sewer Commission (Commission) is providing correction and clarification to statements made in recent news reports about drinking water quality.

A July 11, 2023 article published in *The Republican* and on MassLive.com made a reference to water quality violations for bacteria, inorganics, and turbidity as found in the Commission's 2022 Water Quality Report. As outlined in the report, [which is available on the Commission's website for viewing](#), there were no violations of any of these specific contaminants in 2022. If there had been an exceedance of bacteria, turbidity, or inorganics, customers would have been notified at the time of the exceedance per the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) public notification requirements.

The article also referred to a July 7, 2023 public notification regarding exceedances of disinfection byproducts, specifically HAA5. As stated in the public notification, the HAA5 water quality violation is not a public health emergency. Customers may continue to use and consume the water as normal. The health risks of disinfection byproducts are associated with consumption at elevated levels for many years (i.e. decades or a lifetime). The Commission has issued notices about disinfection byproducts since the first exceedance was detected in late 2018. All notifications have included information about voluntary alternative actions and sources of water for sensitive subpopulations such as the elderly, pregnant women, or infants, and were issued using MassDEP-approved language. The Commission is advancing the design and construction of a new drinking water treatment plant on a rapid schedule to permanently address disinfection byproducts.

The article also mentioned distributing Brita® filters to potentially sensitive subpopulations, as has been done in other areas of the country to temporarily mitigate lead contamination issues. Brita® filters have not been shown to be effective at removing disinfection byproducts, specifically HAA5. Brita® filters distributed elsewhere were being specifically utilized for the removal of lead, which has not been found at elevated levels in the Commission's drinking water distribution system.

Finally, to dispel any potential confusion among customers, the article also mentions combined sewer overflow discharges (combination of wastewater and stormwater) into the Connecticut River due to recent rain. These discharges are associated with the Commission's regional wastewater collection systems, and are completely unrelated to drinking water. The drinking water supply is Cobble Mountain Reservoir in Blandford and Granville, not the Connecticut River.



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The Commission is committed to transparency with their customers about their most essential public resource, their drinking water. In addition to the public notices, the Commission provides in-depth updates on disinfection byproducts and the progress of the drinking water treatment plant on [waterandsewer.org](http://waterandsewer.org), and gladly answers inquiries from the media, public officials, and the public about these important issues facing the region's drinking water. Customers with questions about the July 7, 2023 public notification, DBPs, or their water quality in general are encouraged to contact the Commission by calling 413-310-3501, or by emailing [info@waterandsewer.org](mailto:info@waterandsewer.org).

**Additional Information**

More information can be found on the Commission's website at:

<https://waterandsewer.org/dbps-faqs/>

MassDEP also provides information on DBPs:

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/factsheet-haloacetic-acids-and-total-trihalomethane-in-drinking-water-information-for-consumers/download>

**END**