



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

Date of Issuance: October 6, 2020

Contact: Springfield Water and Sewer Commission - (413) 310-3501  
info@waterandsewer.org

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER  
Haloacetic Acid 5 (HAA5) MCL Violation**

Este informe contiene información importante acerca de su agua potable. Haga que alguien lo traduzca para usted, o hable con alguien que lo entienda.

Este relatório contém informações importantes sobre a água potável. Ter alguém que traduza-lo para você, ou falar com alguém que entende-lo.

Báo cáo này có chứa thông tin rất quan trọng về nước uống của bạn. Xin vui lòng dịch nó hoặc nói chuyện với một ai đó hiểu nó.

The Springfield Water and Sewer Commission (Commission) (PWS ID# 1281000) 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 the situation.

The Commission routinely monitors for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Testing results from September 1, 2020 showed that levels for HAA5 at 2 of the 8 sample locations exceeded the maximum contaminant level (MCL) established by drinking water regulations. The MCL for HAA5 at each location is 60 parts per billion (ppb), calculated as a 12-month running average of quarterly samples. The averages at the 2 locations were 64 and 61 ppb. The Commission has experienced elevated HAA5 since September 2018, which led to the violation of a drinking standard in subsequent quarters.

**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 that form when a disinfectant (chlorine) reacts with dissolved natural organic matter (NOM) in the water.

The MCL is based on the potential health risks associated with drinking water with elevated levels of HAA5 over decades or a lifetime. *People who drink water containing HAA5 in excess of the MCL over many years 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 HAA5.

**What should I do?**

**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 not 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?

HAA5 forms when dissolved 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. Individual sample-site results from September 1, 2020, were all below 60 ppb, indicating that dissolved NOM levels have decreased from previously elevated levels. However, since the regulatory limit is based on the average of the HAA5 results from the past four quarters, the results are still in exceedance of the MCL.

Sample Location	September 1, 2020 Result - parts per billion (ppb)	Locational Running Annual Average (ppb)
Center St. Fire Station, Ludlow	59	64
1043 Sumner Ave., Springfield	56	61

### What is the Commission doing to resolve the problem?

The Commission 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. Last fall, a pilot study commenced to determine the most effective treatment process to remove more dissolved NOM and reduce HAA5. The pilot study is ongoing into this fall. Results from the pilot study will inform the necessary upgrades to make to the treatment plant to address long-term water quality issues, including HAA5. To date, results of the pilot study indicate potential benefits from utilizing an alternate coagulant that is more effective at removing NOM. With the approval of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), a full-scale plant trial of this promising alternative is planned for early winter 2020. If successful, this treatment change would result in water quality improvements in 2021.

The design of the recommended treatment upgrades is scheduled to begin in FY22 at a cost of \$1.9 million. After the design is approved by MassDEP, construction will begin in FY24 at an estimated cost of \$86 million. The Commission is advancing this work as quickly as possible while committing significant resources to the process. The pilot study builds upon an already ongoing comprehensive evaluation of water quality and the water treatment process that began three years prior. A panel of national experts convened by the Commission is guiding these activities. The Commission also regularly implements land management tools according to its Source Water Protection Plan to optimize raw water quality.

### What can I do to help?

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.

### What if I have further questions?

Please contact **413-310-3501** or **info@waterandsewer.org** if you have any questions about this notification.

More information is also available at <https://waterandsewer.org/haa5-frequently-asked-questions/>.

Sent by Springfield Water and Sewer Commission. PWSID#1281000. Date Distributed: October 6, 2020