



# Department of Environmental Protection

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Karyn E. Polito  
Lieutenant Governor

Kathleen A. Theoharides  
Secretary

Martin Suuberg  
Commissioner

November 30, 2020

## Re: MassDEP Private Wells PFAS Sampling Program

Dear Boards of Health, Municipal Leaders, and Other Interested Parties:

This letter is to advise you of an opportunity for laboratory analyses of samples from private wells for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) at no charge, under the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Private Wells PFAS Sampling Program. This program is focused on private wells in areas not predominantly served by Public Water Systems.

As you may be aware, on October 2, 2020, MassDEP published its PFAS public drinking water standard of 20 nanograms per liter (ng/L) (or parts per trillion [ppt]) – individually or for the sum of the concentrations of six specific PFAS: perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS); perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA); perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS); perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), perfluoroheptanoic acid (PFHpA), and perfluorodecanoic acid (PFDA). MassDEP abbreviates this set of six PFAS as “PFAS6.” This drinking water standard is set to be protective against adverse health effects for all people consuming the water. The drinking water standard complements the PFAS waste site notification and cleanup requirements our Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup established in late December 2019.

One of MassDEP’s top responsibilities is to protect public health and drinking water quality for all public drinking water in the Commonwealth. We are also concerned about the safety of private drinking water wells, which are regulated by local boards of health. To assist in these priorities and to characterize the extent of PFAS in the Commonwealth, the Baker-Polito Administration sought and received funding from the Legislature to support testing for PFAS in drinking water in both public water supplies and selected private wells.

Residents of Massachusetts receive their drinking water from approximately 1600 Public Water Systems and from private wells, with more than 500,000 residents served by private wells. The MassDEP Private Wells PFAS Sampling Program will be used to characterize PFAS levels in towns that are not predominantly served by Public Water Systems. MassDEP is partnering with UMass to undertake this program, which consists of the following:

- MassDEP has identified 81 towns where more than 60% of the population is served by private wells. A list of the 81 towns is attached.
- Within these 81 towns, MassDEP will work with its UMass contractor, local Boards of Health, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and other local partners to identify private wells in

This information is available in alternate format. Contact Michelle Waters-Ekanem, Director of Diversity/Civil Rights at 617-292-5751.

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each town for potential PFAS analysis based on geographic distribution within the town and/or proximity to potential sources of PFAS.

- MassDEP/the UMass contactor/local partners will contact the identified well owners and offer the opportunity to sign up for free PFAS sampling. Approximately 40 wells will then be selected in each town for PFAS drinking water lab analysis. The UMass contactor/local partners will contact the selected well owners to arrange for sampling.

**All testing conducted under the MassDEP Private Wells PFAS Sampling Program must be completed before June 30, 2021.**

For more information on the opportunity to participate at no charge in this PFAS sampling program, which includes laboratory analyses of samples and receipt of results, please see the attached Frequently Asked Questions about the MassDEP Private Wells PFAS Sampling Program.

If you are interested in information on the Public Water Systems PFAS Lab Analyses Program see: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>. To find information for clinicians and medical professionals, see: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/resources/index.html>. For more information about PFAS and the MassDEP's efforts to address these contaminants, please see: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas> or contact MassDEP's Drinking Water Program at [program.director-dwp@mass.gov](mailto:program.director-dwp@mass.gov).

Thank you for your interest in working with MassDEP to characterize this emerging contaminant and to protect public health throughout the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,



Yvette DePeiza  
Director, MassDEP Drinking Water Program  
MassDEP

Attachments:

List of 81 priority towns

FAQ about the MassDEP Private Wells PFAS Sampling Program

***THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS IMPORTANT INFORMATION. HAVE SOMEONE TRANSLATE IT FOR YOU OR SPEAK WITH SOMEONE WHO UNDERSTANDS IT.***

If you need this document translated, please contact MassDEP's Diversity Director, Michelle Waters-Ekanem, Diversity Director/Civil Rights: 617-292-5751 TTY# MassRelay Service 1-800-439-2370. You may also contact the Drinking Water Program at [program.director-dwp@mass.gov](mailto:program.director-dwp@mass.gov) .