

NANTUCKET PFAS LISTENING SESSION Q&A (8/17/2021)

#	Topic/Question from Listening Session	Response	Status
TESTING/SAMPLING DATA			
1	Well testing is a snapshot in time – will there be ongoing testing?	<p>The needs for ongoing testing will likely be based on the initial data analyzed and any recommendations/requirements from MassDEP. We have not been informed of any ongoing testing being planned for private wells, but it seems possible. The Town is following the requirements of MassDEP for ongoing PFAS testing of the Town’s public water supply wells. Please see this link for more information</p> <p>https://www.mass.gov/info-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas</p>	Draft for review
2	<p>Testing data is a snapshot in time, and there is variance in testing data. What happens when the data varies over time – people don’t understand how the data changes, how PFAS migrates?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things are deemed “safe” but not “safe” really 	<p>It is known that there is always some variability in sampling and testing procedures. There is also the natural variability of the concentration of chemicals in ground water due to movement of the plume, water recharging the aquifer, and fluctuation in the ground water levels. As we obtain additional experience and information with PFAS testing, our understanding and interpretation of testing results will improve.</p> <p>It is also important to note there is a potential presence of PFAS in common consumer products and in equipment typically used to collect groundwater and drinking water samples. PFAS used in home plumbing systems, often as Teflon tape or pipe dope, may also be detected depending on the location of the sample collection. PFAS is measured in concentrations with very low reporting limits and special handling and care must be taken when collecting samples to avoid sample contamination.</p> <p>For information pertaining to a “safe” exposure level for PFAS and information about testing, please see: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas</p>	Draft for review
3	Inconsistency between testing among neighbors – results vary.	<p>Please see the response to No. 2. The underlying soils and aquifer may be different for each drinking water well, even with neighboring property. Therefore, the results should be considered specific to that well and may or may not accurately represent other wells or locations. A complete understanding of the difference in PFAS results among neighbors requires information that includes testing protocols, subsurface soils, ground water movement, and potential sources of contamination for individual sites (including plumbing). As stated, PFAS is measured in concentrations with very low reporting limits and special handling and care must be taken when collecting samples to avoid sample contamination.</p>	Draft for review

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4	Broader database of data points – more frequent/repeated surveys would show us how groundwater is traveling and changing.	Agreed. Apart from work done in the Airport’s MCP project, the Town has not received many PFAS Laboratory Testing Reports. Because testing will likely become more prevalent in the years ahead, the Town is exploring the development of a PFAS database and mapping tool to best organize the information for analysis and reporting. On 8/18/2021, the Select Board approved a contract to start this activity with Hazen and Sawyer.	Draft for review
TESTING/SAMPLING – MUNICIPAL			
5	Can we expand the number of MA DEP sampling kits? MA is saving money – should channel those savings into more kits – sample size is small right now.	The MassDEP/UMass private well testing program is operated and managed independently of the Town. Approximately 80 towns across Mass are participating in the program and each has been assigned capability for sampling 20-40 well locations. This is a small sample size for each individual town but is intended to provide some initial information about the extent of PFAS contamination across the State. Nantucket has received the maximum number of tests allotted to a municipality in this program. Should you wish to monitor for PFAS at your own expense, as discussed above, you may find a certified laboratory to test for PFAS at https://www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-certified-laboratory-for-water-testing and https://www.nantucket-ma.gov/Faq.aspx?QID=610	Draft for review
6	Sludge from co-composting has PFAS – could we add the co-composting site to monitoring list, as well as other sampling sites?	The Town is following MassDEP requirements for testing the co-compost material. Please find more information and the testing results here: https://nantucket-ma.gov/1993/Solid-Waste The Town and MassDEP are discussing an approach to sampling and testing other media on the landfill site; however, such requirements do not currently exist.	Draft for review

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7	<p>Interesting that the Town is already putting money into wells near the airport. What are the odds that a lot of wells outside the airport vicinity have issues and this money is not going to the right place?</p>	<p>The testing for PFAS in the environment tends to follow a systematic approach where higher risk areas and known/likely PFAS release sites are targeted for initial consideration. When PFAS sampling and testing identifies a concentration that exceeds Reportable Quantities and Reportable Concentrations under the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (MCP), the owner is required to notify MassDEP to determine the next steps.</p> <p>As a suspected release site due to AFFF usage, the Airport performed ground water testing and PFAS was detected in Reportable Concentrations on the Airport property. MassDEP was notified and an Immediate Response Action Plan was prepared by a Licensed Site Professional (LSP) to address the situation, including additional testing.</p> <p>Please find more information on the MCP here: https://www.mass.gov/regulations/310-CMR-4000-massachusetts-contingency-plan and https://www.mass.gov/lists/final-pfas-related-revisions-to-the-mcp-2019</p>	Draft for review
8	<p>Would like to see more consistent/wider scale well testing. These chemicals travel – can’t have a patchy response, needs to be wider, such as</p> <p>Regular sampling more widely – throughout the island.</p>	<p>There is a growing interest in the community for more sampling and testing of private wells across the island. In previous discussions with Angela Gallagher at MassDEP, it seems that results of the testing in the 2021 UMass/MassDEP testing program will help to better inform a larger scale testing program and may include additional funding by the state.</p> <p>The 40 wells selected by the UMass/MassDEP testing program were dispersed throughout the island, which will provide a strong preliminary overview across the island, as opposed to focusing on specific locations. Locations for future testing will likely be informed by results obtained in these earlier tests, along with information on the flow of ground water in the underlying soils and impacts to potential down-stream receptors.</p> <p>Residents also may begin testing other sources independently, if desired and at their own expense, and are encouraged to provide any such results to the Town Health Dept. You may find a certified laboratory to test for PFAS at https://www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-certified-laboratory-for-water-testing and https://www.nantucket-ma.gov/Faq.aspx?QID=610</p>	Draft for review

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9	With PFAS contamination of drinking water wells and unlined cell of the landfill, want additional landfill sites to be sampled, as well as Madaket wells. Is there an avenue to add more sampling sites?	The assessment of the landfill site for PFAS contamination is currently being discussed with MassDEP as to sample locations, media tested, and timeframe to prepare a sampling plan for testing in in the next phase of work. We will have more information after a meeting with MassDEP in September.	Draft for review
TESTING/SAMPLING – INDIVIDUAL			
10	If we applied for and didn't win the well testing lottery, what other resources are available? Are there other affordable options that folks can take advantage of?	<p>MassDEP will provide technical assistance information on PFAS for all private well owners as part of its private well guidance and outreach program that will engage Boards of Health and other local partners. There are many resources already available for private well owners listed below, and the UMass Technical Assistance Providers are available to answer questions at pfas-pwo@umass.edu. The Rural Community Assistance Program (RCAP) is also available to provide technical assistance to private well owners. Contact RCAP at https://www.rcapsolutions.org/contact/.</p> <p>Should you wish to monitor for PFAS at your own expense, as discussed above, you may find a certified laboratory to test for PFAS at https://www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-certified-laboratory-for-water-testing and https://www.nantucket-ma.gov/Faq.aspx?QID=610.</p>	Draft for review
11	Any programs or potential to cover the cost of testing through other means?	Currently, we are not aware of any known programs to cover the cost of PFAS testing by property owners.	Draft for review
12	Can people pay for their own sampling (~\$400-\$2000 to self-test)? If so, what's the avenue to do so?	Yes, please see: https://www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-certified-laboratory-for-water-testing and https://www.nantucket-ma.gov/Faq.aspx?QID=610 .	Draft for review
13	How can we clean water in our homes?	Bottled water and home water filters are two possible options. Additional information is available here: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas (scroll down to "Bottled water and home water filters" in the Table of Contents).	Draft for review
14	Can we work with a lab to get bulk sampling/testing rates to drive down costs?	Currently, we are not aware of any known bulk sampling/testing programs and property owners may wish to inquire with each lab.	Draft for review

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15	For folks whose wells tested <20 PPT (receiving bottled water, but no other compensation) – opportunity to give folks whose wells have PFAS additional compensation, assistance, etc.? Is the Town preparing to offer people w/ less than 20PPT any remedy when they are able to tie into Town water?		Needs research
16	Is public funding available for getting wells retested?	For the UMass/MassDEP program, if the lab results of the first samples indicate that individually or the sum of any of the six-regulated PFAS chemicals are detected at levels greater than 10 parts per trillion (ppt) in the water, MassDEP may request that the well owner collect one or more additional samples to confirm the result and to help identify any potential sources of PFAS contamination. The confirmatory samples are part of the free analyses; the well owner will be contacted and provided with a confirmation sampling kit. For more information, please see: https://www.mass.gov/doc/frequently-asked-questions-about-the-massdep-private-wells-pfas-sampling-program/download	Draft for review
17	Need to reduce the cost/complications for testing – need more testing, across the board – need more consistency in testing.		
18	We would want individual sampling to be included in the broader context and be part of the larger analysis that’s going on.	The compiling of testing information into a database is something we are planning to explore with MassDEP. The desire is to have process for residents to submit individualized sampling data for inclusion in the database to expand upon the scope of our understanding of PFAS on the island. Again, any such individualized sampling and submission to the database will be at the individual's own expense and, regardless of results for private wells, the Town will not be responsible for any future testing unless required by MassDEP.	Draft for review
19	North of the airport – wondering how do we find out the condition of our water?		
PFAS RESPONSIBILITY			

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20	How will private (non-municipal) sources of PFAS be identified and addressed moving forward?		
21	Are there specific commercial uses such as car washes, etc. that may be a known or potential source of PFAS that new/additional regulations should be considered to address (with regard to existing but also future development)?		
22	What are the responsibilities of commercial property owners whose property activity may impact abutting residential homes re: PFAS?		
23	I live in the area where a new water line is being run by the airport but have heard the airport is blaming the former Glowacki property and have yet to test my well. Will my well be tested? If there's contamination from the NW property, who will take responsibility; what's the recourse?		
24	What about all of the non-municipal sources – how do we locate and address those?		

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25	<p>What is the mitigation for when people find more than acceptable level of PFAS in their water?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can be done to clean up the water for household use? 	<p>PFAS6 compounds are readily removed from drinking water with the installation of a proper treatment system. MassDEP and the UMass contractor will contact the private well owner and provide technical assistance on any recommended steps to take based on the PFAS results. Recommendations may include installing a treatment system to address PFAS in drinking water and immediately switching to PFAS-free bottled water. The costs of installing a whole house treatment system is typically in the low-thousands of dollars with ongoing maintenance costs for testing and filter replacement. Point of use treatment systems (such as one dedicated to your kitchen sink) may also be effective with smaller initial costs (less than \$500) but will require more frequent testing and filter replacement to ensure water quality. See: https://www.mass.gov/doc/frequently-asked-questions-about-the-massdep-private-wells-pfas-sampling-program/download (#15).</p>	Draft for review
REGIONAL COLLABORATION/BEST PRACTICES			
26	<p>As the Island is dealing with a lot of issues, how much should we be working with other regional/coastal communities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we work better together, instead of lots of little programs, and advocate at state level? 		
27	<p>What are other towns doing to address the issue in general?</p>		
28	<p>What are other communities doing to address non-municipal sources of PFAS?</p>		
ENGAGEMENT AROUND PFAS			
29	<p>Call to action – what should residents be doing to protect themselves and the Island into the future?</p>		

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30	CDM Smith is looking at Town properties only; and all the stakeholders in the project are Town entities – want broader stakeholder engagement		
31	Civic associations/neighborhood associations could get involved as well to make sure people get the info that they need and take the needed actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it's a well-planned initiative, the Community foundation could be involved aswell 		
32	Looking for ways to easily connect with existing initiatives		
33	We're proud of our progress but all these people rely on the fundamental utilities and water quality – the more information we can get to inform our group will be helpful. Housing Nantucket would like to be included in future discussions.		
34	Would like broader participation in the PFAS Action Group and increased transparency	We are aware of the PFAS Action Group and the Town has been meeting with them to exchange information and coordinate activities. As a community group, they are operating as an information/sharing resource. If you would like more information, please see https://www.pfasactiongroup.com/ or contact them at pfasactiongroup@gmail.com	Draft for review

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35	<p>Would like to see a greater sense of urgency and inclusion in the PFAS work group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend/increase the meetings and include folks who are incorporated into the updates • Want more outlets, so that we're not relying on a few people for all the information • There are a lot of people who don't know/understand the basics 		
COMMUNICATION FROM THE TOWN			
36	Town could use neighborhood associations		
37	<p>Unconventional channels – social media – different listening groups</p> <p>Approach different groups for suggestions</p>	<p>Information about the Town's PFAS efforts have been pushed out on Town social media, the Town Manager's monthly newsletters, and at several Select Board meetings (including a joint meeting with the Board of Health) but it is helpful to hear that we are not hitting the correct audience or not pushing out the messaging enough.</p> <p>Most recently, the Town's Public Outreach Coordinator has been engaged to incorporate successful mechanisms that she used for COVID-19 outreach. It is the Town's hope that with the creation of the Community Outreach Group (COG) with the Town's PFAS communications plan, there will be the ability to solicit broader channels for outreach.</p> <p>Suggestions for alternative channels of information are always welcome.</p>	Draft for review
38	Human services – different languages?		
39	Town does a good job posting documents – staff is helpful when documents are difficult to navigate		
40	The way the Town is responding now is good – getting ahead of PFAS as much as possible	Thank you. We have been informed that the Town is well ahead of many communities in these efforts and we are fortunate to have the resources and expertise available to us to proactively analyze any issues with PFAS on Nantucket.	Draft for review

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41	<p>The Town should be very public about what they are doing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea of PFAS is worrisome • Where do we go to find out about it? This should be more prominent/easier to find 	<p>The Town has assembled significant PFAS information on its website, which has been made readily available to the public, including the testing reports submitted to MassDEP. See https://nantucket-ma.gov/PFAS.. Other references include: https://www.epa.gov/pfas and https://www.mass.gov/info-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas.</p> <p>We are happy to consider any suggestions or resources available to better organize the Town’s PFAS webpage, and feel free contact us at PFAS@nantucket-ma.gov.</p>	Draft for review
42	Regular updates at the Select Board meetings	The Select Board will continue to provide regular public information sessions on the PFAS testing, as any new information becomes available, and will continue posting on the Town website. All residents are encouraged to check the website regularly for updates.	Draft for review
43	Summary to keep interested members of the public informed through the Selectman's office – regular basis	See response to #42, above.	Draft for review
44	Use every avenue – explore different ways to make sure we’re all kept informed	See response to #42, above.	Draft for review
45	PFAS Action Group on Facebook has great information available (they show where you can go to get more information).		
FIREFIGHTERS			
46	<p>Firefighter impacts from use of foam and gear – monitoring these firefighters to ensure there is regular testing</p> <p>Past and current firefighters</p>	<p>A bill has been introduced to the MA Legislature regulate the use of PFAS in firefighter personal protective equipment. Members of the public may contact their state representatives to support bills to reduce toxic chemicals in firefighter equipment and provide funding for municipalities for testing and other such efforts. See https://malegislature.gov/Bills/192/S1576 for more information.</p>	Draft for review
47	What is the Town’s proposal/intentions on treatment of Firefighters and EMTs that have been exposed to the firefighting foam?		

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OTHER COMMENTS			
48	Would like a dedicated resource with expertise in the field	The Town hired an expert PFAS consulting group, CDM Smith, on July 22, 2020, to provide state-of-the-art technical assistance to help understand the presence and movement of PFAS on Nantucket, and ultimately source reduction and control. The Phase I PFAS Preliminary Assessment Report is available here . CDM Smith is working with the Town and preparing an approach to sampling and testing for PFAS at Town facilities. Technical questions about PFAS may be sent to PFAS@nantucket-ma.gov and CDM Smith will assist as needed.	Draft for review
49	PPM vs. PPT – would like to learn more about the difference in magnitude, and why things are measured on the scale they are.	Please see the 2-page fact sheet entitled “Understanding Units of Measurement” as a helpful resource. It is nicely prepared for citizens by Kansas State University and the Center for Hazardous Substance Research: https://www.engg.ksu.edu/CHSR/outreach/resources/docs/2UnitsofMeasure022508.pdf .	Draft for review
50	What if our one aquifer is compromised?		
51	Consumer Reports Director of Product Safety – the most dangerous way people are exposed is through drinking water <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of us who have lived in this area have had levels that are higher over time, depending on variables 		
52	Feel bad for people who have tested on their own and have mid/low PFAS levels.	Property owners with PFAS concentrations measured in their well water may feel free to contact Angela Gallagher with the MassDEP 508-946-2790 or angela.gallagher@state.ma.us to discuss options.	Draft for review
53	This is a great beginning. Appreciate this initiative.	Thank you. The Town has been proactive in analyzing and addressing any issues to protect its residents.	Draft for review
COMMENTS SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE			

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54	I live on Milestone Rd. and would like to have my water tested. How do I sign up to do that? Thank You.		
55	Have these chemicals been present in Wells tested down S. Shore Rd., Folger Avenue and Field Avenue?	After checking the Town's project emails and files, there are currently no reports or indications of PFAS testing of wells on South Shore Road, Folger Avenue, and Field Avenue. The Town is not required to obtain a copy of PFAS testing results done electively by owners, but we sometimes do get a copy to help answer any questions.	Draft for review
56	What kind of shower filter do you recommend that would remove these chemicals? Thank you.	<p>The following sources provide information from MassDEP and EPA on PFAS and water treatment, including the types of filters that are effective in removing PFAS from water: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas-in-private-well-drinking-water-supplies-faq and https://www.mass.gov/info-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas and https://www.epa.gov/pfas/treating-pfas-drinking-water.</p> <p>You may also reach out to Angela Gallagher with the MassDEP at 508-946-2790 or angela.gallagher@state.ma.us for additional information.</p>	Draft for review

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