

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

This report contains important information about your drinking water. Please translate it or speak with someone who understands it or ask the contact listed below for a translation.

Acton Water District has levels of PFAS6 above the Drinking Water Standard

What happened?

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard for PFAS6 during the Quarter 3, 2023 compliance period at our North Acton Water Treatment Plant (NAWTP) with a quarterly average of 22 nanograms per liter (ng/L). Monthly samples collected at the NAWTP during this compliance period reported levels of PFAS6 between 20 and 24 ng/L. The quarterly average of PFAS6 at the NAWTP has ranged between 17 and 27 ng/L from Quarter 1, 2021 to date. Monthly samples collected at our Central Acton Water Treatment Plant (CAWTP) during this compliance period reported levels of PFAS6 between 8 and 10 ng/L for a quarterly average of 9 ng/L, which complies with the state standard. The quarterly average of PFAS6 at the CAWTP has ranged between 7 and 29 ng/L since its operation began in Quarter 1, 2022. Our system will continue to notify consumers every 3 months with updated information.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified within 24 hours. Although this is not an emergency, as our customer, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

On October 2, 2020, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) promulgated a new drinking water regulation and maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 20 nanograms per liter (ng/L) for the sum of six per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (called PFAS6). An MCL is the maximum permissible level of a contaminant in water which is delivered to any user of a public water system. See our latest results at www.actonwater.com/pfas.

Our results are above the MCL for PFAS6. ***Some people who drink water containing these PFAS in excess of the MCL may experience certain adverse effects. These could include effects on the liver, blood, immune system, thyroid, and fetal development. These PFAS may also elevate the risk of certain cancers.*** For more information on PFAS6, see the weblinks listed below.

What is PFAS6?

PFAS6 includes perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS), perfluorodecanoic acid (PFDA) and perfluoroheptanoic acid (PFHpA). PFAS are man-made chemicals that have been used in the manufacturing of certain fire-fighting foams, moisture and stain resistant products, and other industrial processes.

What do I need to do?

For consumers in a sensitive subgroup (pregnant or nursing women, infants and people diagnosed by their health care provider to have a compromised immune system):

- **Consumers in a sensitive subgroup are advised not to consume, drink, or cook with water when the level of PFAS6 is above 20 ng/L.**
- **Consumers in sensitive subgroups** are advised to use bottled water for drinking and cooking of foods that absorb water (like pasta).
- **For infant formula**, use bottled water or use formula that does not require adding water.
- **Bottled water should only be used if it has been tested.** The Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires companies licensed to sell or distribute bottled water or carbonated non-alcoholic beverages to test for PFAS. See <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/water-quality-standards-for-bottled-water-in-massachusetts#list-of-bottlers->.
- **For older children and adults not in a sensitive subgroup**, you may continue to use water as you normally would, because the 20 ng/L value is applicable to a lifetime of consuming the water. For these groups, shorter duration exposures present less risk. However, if you are concerned about your exposure while steps are being

taken to assess and lower the PFAS concentration in the drinking water, use of bottled water¹ will reduce your exposure.

- **If you have specific health concerns regarding exposure**, you should see the Centers for Disease Control's link below and consult a health professional, such as your doctor.
- **Home water treatment systems** that are certified to remove PFAS by an independent testing group such as NSF, UL, or Water Quality Association may be used to treat the water. These may include point of entry systems, which treat all the water entering a home, or point of use devices, which treat water where it is used, such as at a faucet. For information on selecting home treatment devices that are effective in treating the water for PFAS6, review the MassDEP factsheet for consumers referenced below.
- **In most situations the water can be safely used for washing foods, brushing teeth, bathing, and showering.**

Please note: Boiling the water will not destroy PFAS6 and will somewhat increase its level due to evaporation of some of the water.

What is being done?

The Acton Water District has taken the following pro-active measures:

- We are investigating and implementing additional treatment to reduce the levels of PFAS6 below the MCL.
- System operations have been modified to minimize PFAS6 levels in water being served to customers.
- Additional sources of supply have been activated and others are being pursued for connection to our system to reduce the levels of PFAS6.
- A bottled water rebate is available for those in a sensitive subgroup at <https://www.actonwater.com/customer-service/bottled-water-rebate-program-for-sensitive-subgroups>.
- When additional information becomes available, this public notice will be updated. More frequent updates may be available by subscribing to our PFAS Updates list (information to subscribe is on our website.)

Where can I get more information?

If you have questions about your water system's operation, water quality monitoring, or response to this issue, please contact Matthew Mostoller or Alexandra Wahlstrom at 978-263-9107, wq@actonwater.com or Acton Water District, P.O. Box 953, Acton, MA 01720. If you have questions about the drinking water regulations or health risks posed by this contaminant, you can contact the MassDEP Drinking Water Program at: program.director-dwp@mass.gov or (617) 292-5770. If you have questions about specific symptoms, you can contact your doctor or other health care provider. If you have general questions about public health, you can contact the Massachusetts Department of Public Health at (617) 624-5757.

- [MassDEP Fact Sheet - Questions and Answers for Consumers](https://www.mass.gov/media/1854351)
<https://www.mass.gov/media/1854351>
- [CDC ATSDR Information on PFAS for consumers and health professionals](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/index.html)
<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/index.html>
- [Massachusetts Department of Public Health information about PFAS in Drinking Water](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas-in-drinking-water)
<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas-in-drinking-water>
- [Acton Water District – PFAS Information](https://www.actonwater.com/pfas)
<https://www.actonwater.com/pfas>

This notice is being sent to you by:

Acton Water District

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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.