

Water Supply District of Acton

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Joint Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners and Finance Committee Meeting Agenda

Monday, April 13, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

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- **Comments from the public**
- **Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually**
- **Approve Minutes from 3/9, 3/23, and 4/3 meetings**

OLD BUSINESS:

- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
 - Current sample data, if available
 - Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades
- Discuss Special District Meeting
- Review Draft Budget for FY'27
- Discuss Rates and Fees

NEW BUSINESS:

- Drought Status and Water Use Restrictions

EXECUTIVE SESSION: To conduct strategy sessions for contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

Any agenda item(s) which did not come to the attention of the Board of Water Commissioners 48 hours prior to this meeting and were not reasonably anticipated.

Board of Water Commissioners & Finance Committee Joint Meeting

Meeting Agenda

Monday, March 9, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

- Comments from the public
- Approve minutes from the meeting of 2/23
- Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually

OLD BUSINESS:

- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
 - Current sample data, if available
 - Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades
 - EBC Panel Discussion
- Annual District Meeting Presentation

NEW BUSINESS:

- Warrant Article Assignments
- Discussion of Annual Meeting and Surplus Revenue Articles

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

Commissioners: Stephen Stuntz (Chair), Erika Lin, Barry Rosen

Finance Committee: John Petersen, Bill Guthlein

District Manager: Matt Mostoller

Deputy District Manager: Corey Godfrey

District Treasurer/Collector: Ashley Pinard

District Moderator: Bill Mullin

District Counsel: Spencer Holland

District Clerk: Joe Robb

Members of the Public: Alissa Nicol, Kim Kastens

START OF MINUTES

Mr. Stuntz opened the meeting at 7:01 p.m. and ensured that everyone could hear and be heard.

Mr. Guthlein opened the Finance Committee meeting at 7:03 p.m. under the same conditions as the Board of Water Commissioners.

Comments from the public

No public comments were offered at this time.

Approve minutes from the meetings of 2/23/2026

Ms. Lin motioned to approve the minutes from the meeting held on February 23, 2026. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved by roll call vote: Mr. Rosen, Ms. Lin, and Mr. Stuntz.

Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually

Mr. Rosen motioned to authorize Commissioner Lin to sign warrants while meetings are conducted virtually, through the next regularly scheduled meeting. Mr. Stuntz seconded, and it was unanimously approved via roll call vote: Mr. Rosen, Ms. Lin, and Mr. Stuntz.

OLD BUSINESS:

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

Current sample data, if available

Mr. Mostoller reported that the District received its first round of non-detect PFAS sample results from the South Acton Treatment Facility. The samples were collected on February 27, 2026, and results were received shortly before the meeting. Mr. Mostoller stated that this represents the first confirmation that the facility is successfully removing PFAS compounds to non-detect levels under current testing standards.

Mr. Mostoller noted that the District will continue monitoring and sampling to confirm consistent treatment performance as the facility continues operating.

Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades

Mr. Mostoller provided updates regarding the status of PFAS mitigation projects across the District.

The South Acton treatment facility is currently providing water to the distribution system. Remaining work at the site is largely administrative or minor construction items that do not impact plant operations.

The Center Acton treatment facility has received a conditional approval letter from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). Staff expect the facility to come online within the next several weeks once final operational items and approvals are completed.

At North Acton, the District is preparing to replace the treatment media used in PFAS filtration. Removal of the existing media is scheduled to begin on March 30, 2026, after which new media will be installed and conditioned. Mr. Mostoller noted that this process typically requires two to three weeks before the facility can be returned to full operation.

Mr. Mostoller stated that once these projects are fully completed, the District will have implemented PFAS treatment across its system using currently available technology.

EBC Panel Discussion

Mr. Mostoller informed the Board that he will be participating in an upcoming Environmental Business Council of New England (EBC) PFAS panel discussion. The panel will include representatives from municipalities including Newburyport and Concord, as well as representatives from wastewater utilities.

Mr. Mostoller stated that the discussion will focus on local impacts due to PFAS contamination, including treatment strategies, regulatory challenges, community response, and financial impacts on water systems. This is an important point of view for regulators, policy makers, and consultants to understand therefore he is prioritizing being able to share Acton's story.

Annual District Meeting Presentation

Mr. Petersen presented draft slides prepared for the Annual District Meeting presentation. Commissioners reviewed the slides in detail and discussed possible revisions to improve clarity and presentation flow.

The group discussed whether water usage should continue to be presented in cubic feet, which aligns with the units used on District water bills. Members agreed that maintaining consistency with billing units is helpful, while also providing a conversion reference to gallons.

Slides discussing PFAS litigation were reviewed. Mr. Petersen explained that the District has received approximately \$2 million in settlement funds to date from litigation involving PFAS manufacturers. Commissioners discussed the proposed creation of a PFAS Settlement Fund that would hold these funds for PFAS-related expenditures and reimbursements.

The presentation also reviewed the FY27 budget, which reflects a projected increase in debt service associated with PFAS treatment infrastructure. Mr. Petersen noted that the use of settlement funds will help offset some costs and allow the District to keep water rates unchanged for FY27 despite the increased debt service.

Commissioners discussed simplifying the presentation slides by reducing written text and allowing presenters to explain details verbally. Suggestions were also made to improve the readability of charts and graphs used in the presentation.

Ms. Nicol provided comments regarding slide layout and suggested reducing the amount of written text to make slides easier for viewers to follow during the presentation.

NEW BUSINESS:

Warrant Article Assignments

Mr. Mostoller presented a draft list to assign Commissioners and Finance Committee members to present specific warrant articles at the upcoming Annual District Meeting.

Assignments were reviewed and generally accepted by the Board. Several articles relating to infrastructure maintenance, operational funds, and system improvements were distributed among Commissioners for presentation.

During discussion, Mr. Petersen noted that some related surplus revenue articles appear similar in purpose and suggested that in future warrants the District may consider consolidating certain articles for clarity. Mr. Mostoller noted the warrant articles are designed to provide transparency, to establish financial tracking, and ensure funds are available for known and unknown needs of running a utility.

Discussion of Annual Meeting and Surplus Revenue Articles

The Board discussed how to proceed if free cash certification is not received prior to the Annual District Meeting.

Mr. Mostoller explained that certification from the Department of Revenue (DOR) had not yet been received and would not likely be available in time for the meeting. Several warrant articles rely on free cash and therefore cannot be acted upon without certification.

District Moderator Mr. Mullin and District Counsel Mr. Holland reviewed procedural options available under those circumstances. These options include:

- Taking up warrant articles that do not rely on free cash
- Passing over Articles 7 through 14 until free cash is certified
- Scheduling a future Special District Meeting to address those articles once certification is received

The Board discussed the possibility of keeping the Annual Meeting open temporarily or reconvening at a later date, but ultimately agreed that the meeting should proceed with articles that can legally be considered. Articles dependent on free cash may be passed over and addressed at a later meeting if necessary.

Mr. Petersen explained that he had been exploring a potential amendment to the proposed FY27 budget to reduce the amount of revenue collected relative to projected expenses. His concept involved reducing the planned debt service line by approximately \$300,000, which would effectively balance the budget without generating additional surplus revenue.

District Counsel, Mr. Holland noted that amendments which directly or indirectly require changes to water rates are generally outside the authority of the Annual District Meeting because rate setting authority resides with the Commissioners.

Mr. Mullin explained the procedures that would apply if a budget amendment were introduced at the meeting. If Mr. Petersen wished to present a proposal in his personal capacity rather than as a Finance Committee recommendation, he would step away from the Finance Committee table and speak as an individual voter. The Commissioners would then have the opportunity to discuss and respond to the amendment.

Mr. Mostoller emphasized the importance of adopting a budget before July 1, noting that the District cannot operate without an approved budget beginning with the start of the new fiscal year.

Ms. Lin stated that in presenting Article 4, she intends to highlight the District's careful financial management and the Commissioners' commitment to fiscal responsibility. She noted that the proposed budget reflects extensive planning and supports the District's primary mission of providing reliable water service to the community.

Mr. Petersen motioned to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Guthlein seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Rosen moved to adjourn the Board of Water Commissioners meeting. Ms. Lin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by roll call vote.

The meeting closed at 8:41 p.m.

The annual meeting will be held on March 18 at 6:00 PM at the Acton Public Safety Facility (371 Main Street, Acton, MA 01720).

DRAFT

Board of Water Commissioners

Meeting Agenda

Monday, March 23, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

- Comments from the public
- Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually

OLD BUSINESS:

- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
 - Current sample data, if available
 - Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades
 - Bottled Water Rebate Update
- MassDEP Emergency Declaration

NEW BUSINESS:

- Kennedy Well Improvements
- Review Annual District Meeting
- Discuss Rates and Fees
- Discuss Special District Meeting

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- To conduct strategy sessions for contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

Commissioners: Stephen Stuntz (Chair), Erika Lin, Barry Rosen

District Manager: Matt Mostoller

Deputy District Manager: Corey Godfrey

Treasurer/Collector: Ashley Pinard

District Moderator: Bill Mullin

District Clerk: Joe Robb

Members of the Public: Alissa Nicol, John Petersen, Ron Parenti, Kim Kastens, Tom Wolf
Brewster Conant, Jr.; Bernadette Conant

START OF MINUTES

Mr. Stuntz opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and ensured that everyone could hear and be heard.

Comments from the public

Alissa Nicol commented that she had difficulty locating the Annual District Meeting warrant articles online. She suggested that warrant materials be more prominently displayed and clearly identified. Ms. Nicol further commented that the warrant lacks sufficient detail for voters, specifically noting that appropriation amounts are not included directly and instead require reference to additional documents. She expressed that voters should be able to review complete financial information within the warrant itself.

Ms. Nicol also provided comments regarding Article 4 and the current rate structure. She suggested that the District consider revisiting its approach to debt service and explore the use of settlement funds to provide relief to current ratepayers, particularly those funding PFAS-related capital improvements. She also referenced the concept of generational equity and suggested evaluating whether costs should be distributed differently between current and future users.

Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually

Mr. Stuntz motioned to authorize Commissioner Rosen to sign warrants while meetings are conducted virtually, through the next regularly scheduled meeting. Ms. Lin seconded, and it was unanimously approved via roll call vote: Mr. Rosen, Ms. Lin, and Mr. Stuntz.

OLD BUSINESS:

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

Current sample data, if available

Mr. Mostoller reported that there was no new PFAS sample data available at this time, as March sampling had only recently begun.

Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades

Mr. Mostoller reported that the South Acton PFAS treatment facility has been fully operational for several weeks. He noted that the facility experienced some operational challenges, including a period where the plant needed to run to waste while adjustments were made. He explained that while the facility is approved for operation, staff are still gaining operational experience and addressing initial system issues.

Mr. Mostoller further stated that the Center Acton facility has not yet been fully brought online. Based on recent experience in South Acton, staff are proceeding cautiously to avoid potential system disruptions, particularly while North Acton is taken offline for annual maintenance and media change out.

Bottled Water Rebate Update

Mr. Mostoller recommended extending the bottled water rebate program through April 2026 due to delays in fully integrating the Center Acton PFAS system.

Ms. Lin made a motion to extend the Bottled Water Rebate Program through April 2026. Mr. Stuntz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

MassDEP Emergency Declaration

Mr. Mostoller reported that the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) formally terminated the water emergency declaration on March 11, 2026.

Despite this, the District will maintain a Level IV water use restriction due to ongoing operational constraints associated with PFAS system startup and delayed annual maintenance.

Mr. Rosen made a motion to authorize sending letters of appreciation to the Towns of Concord and Littleton for their assistance during the emergency. Ms. Lin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

Kennedy Well Improvements

Mr. Godfrey provided an overview of ongoing work at the Kennedy Well field in North Acton. While recent redevelopment efforts have improved well capacity, inspections revealed significant deterioration of infrastructure due to corrosive groundwater conditions.

Mr. Godfrey explained that many steel components are at risk of failure, and that replacement costs may exceed \$150,000. He noted that repairs could take approximately two months and may impact operations during peak summer demand.

Mr. Mostoller added that the District is evaluating both short-term rehabilitation and long-term replacement options in consultation with hydrogeologists and engineers. Construction is anticipated for fall or early winter 2026.

In the interim, the wells will remain in service, with contingency plans in place to address potential failures during the summer.

Review Annual District Meeting

Mr. Stuntz expressed disappointment that the FY2027 budget was not approved at the Annual District Meeting. He also noted that the meeting venue was undersized for attendance and may not be suitable for future meetings.

Mr. Rosen and Ms. Lin discussed feedback received from residents following the meeting. Several individuals expressed confusion regarding Article 4, with some believing they were voting on water rates rather than the operating budget.

Ms. Lin stated that the discussion at the Annual Meeting was marked by confusion and emphasized the need for clearer communication moving forward. She noted that the Board must ensure that voters understand what the budget article represents and what they are being asked to approve.

Mr. Rosen agreed and emphasized the importance of clearly distinguishing between budget approval and rate-setting.

Discuss Rates and Fees

Mr. Mostoller provided an overview of the District's rate structure philosophy, including the use of fixed fees to support debt service and ensure revenue stability. He explained that approximately 90% of water utility costs are fixed and that the current structure supports bond ratings and financial predictability.

Mr. Mostoller also outlined existing customer assistance measures, including lifeline usage thresholds, senior discounts, payment plans, and a policy of not shutting off water service.

He addressed the status of a proposed rate study, noting that while planning has begun, the effort has been delayed due to ongoing PFAS projects and other priorities.

Mr. Mostoller discussed potential upcoming adjustments, including:

- Implementation of the proposed debt fee increase ("85.25")
- Review and potential increases to connection fees and fire service fees
- Consideration of long-term structural balance between fixed and usage-based charges

Commissioners discussed the importance of timing and the need to ensure adequate revenue collection early in the fiscal year.

Public comment emphasized the need for a comprehensive rate study, improved communication of rate-setting philosophy, and consideration of conservation incentives and equity impacts.

Discuss Special District Meeting

Mr. Mostoller emphasized the urgency of approving a budget prior to July 1, 2026, noting that failure to do so would prevent the District from operating and may require notification to MassDEP that could have negative consequences.

He reported progress on reconciling financial accounts related to free cash certification, though submission to the Department of Revenue (DOR) is still pending.

Mr. Mostoller recommended scheduling a Special District Meeting to reconsider the budget and, if necessary, holding additional meetings until approval is obtained.

Commissioners discussed potential meeting dates in April and the importance of avoiding conflicts such as school vacation week.

Discussion also focused on improving communication ahead of the Special Meeting, including:

- Providing clearer explanations of the budget
- Enhancing warrant materials
- Considering a presentation to guide voters through the article

Public comment reinforced the importance of clarity, transparency, and documenting the District's decision-making philosophy to improve understanding and build public trust.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Mr. Rosen made a motion to adjourn the public meeting and enter an executive session to conduct strategy sessions for contract negotiations with non-union personnel, and that the Board will not reconvene in open session. Ms. Lin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

The meeting closed at 8:22 p.m.

A joint meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners and Finance Committee is scheduled for March 30, 2026.

Joint Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners and Finance Committee

Meeting Agenda

Friday, April 3, 2026 @ 3:00 PM

- Comments from the public

OLD BUSINESS:

- Discuss Special District Meeting
- Review Draft Budget for FY'27
- Discuss Rates and Fees

NEW BUSINESS:

- Approve Warrant for Special District Meeting

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

Commissioners: Stephen Stuntz (Chair), Erika Lin, Barry Rosen

Finance Committee: John Petersen; Bill Guthlein

District Manager: Matt Mostoller

Deputy District Manager: Corey Godfrey

Treasurer/Collector: Ashley Pinard

District Counsel: Spencer Holland

District Clerk: Joe Robb

Members of the Public: Kim Kastens, Alissa Nicol, Ron Parenti

START OF MINUTES

Mr. Stuntz opened the meeting at 3:01 p.m. and ensured that everyone could hear and be heard. Mr. Guthlein opened the Finance Committee meeting at 3:02 p.m. under the same conditions as the Board meeting.

Comments from the public

There were no public comments at the outset of the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Discuss Special District Meeting

Mr. Mostoller stated that the FY2027 budget article (*Article 4*) was not approved at the Annual District Meeting (3/18/26) and that a Special District Meeting would be required to reconsider the budget. Due to the inability to legally meet on March 30, 2026 to call an April 16, 2026 Special District Meeting, Mr. Mostoller recommended moving forward during school vacation week to avoid additional scheduling conflicts and delays. The Board discussed availability constraints, including travel schedules, Town Meeting, and school vacation week.

Following discussion, there was general agreement to schedule the Special District Meeting for **Wednesday, April 22, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.**

Mr. Mostoller stated that the warrant would include a single article to address the operating budget and would need to be closed at this meeting (4/3/2026) to meet the required two-week posting timeline.

During this discussion, Kim Kastens (Green Acton Water Committee) commented on the Annual District Meeting, noting that the language presented on the projection screen did not match the warrant article. She specifically referenced wording that suggested approval of the budget “as printed in the annual report,” which she stated may have led voters to believe they were approving the full detailed budget rather than a total appropriation. Ms. Kastens emphasized the importance of ensuring consistency between warrant language, presentation materials, and motions to avoid confusion.

The Board acknowledged this concern and noted that additional attention would be given to improving clarity in materials and presentation for the Special District Meeting.

Review Draft Budget for FY’27

Mr. Mostoller presented the draft FY2027 budget, including the previously proposed \$8.5 million operating budget.

Mr. Mostoller reported that additional infrastructure issues have been identified at the Kennedy Wells in North Acton. He explained that recent inspections during maintenance revealed that the condition of the wells has deteriorated beyond what was previously anticipated, and that earlier planned repairs may no longer be sufficient.

Mr. Mostoller stated that the District is evaluating options including repair, rehabilitation, or replacement, and that engineering analysis will be required to determine the appropriate course of action. He noted that one well may be structurally compromised.

Mr. Mostoller presented two options:

- Proceed with the previously proposed \$8.5 million budget, or
- Increase the budget by approximately \$1 million to address the well-related work and other emerging needs.

He stated that if the additional work is not included in the FY2027 budget, the District would need to return to voters at a future Special District Meeting to request funding.

Mr. Mostoller further noted that approximately \$200,000 to \$250,000 is already available for this work, but additional funds would be required.

During this discussion, Alissa Nicol asked about the uncertainty of the estimated costs, noting that the figures are based on planning-level estimates. Ms. Nicol suggested that it may be appropriate to return to voters at a later meeting with more refined cost information.

Mr. Mostoller responded that while the estimates are preliminary, delaying action would postpone revenue collection and could require larger rate increases later. He emphasized that the need for the work itself is not expected to change.

The Board and Finance Committee discussed the implications of both options, including operational risks, timing, and financial impacts. There was general agreement that the work is necessary and will need to be addressed.

Discuss Rates and Fees

Mr. Mostoller presented rate scenarios associated with the proposed budget options, including impacts to the median residential water bill.

Mr. Mostoller stated that incorporating the additional infrastructure work into the budget would result in an approximate \$100 increase in the annual median water bill under current assumptions.

Discussion focused on:

- Funding the increase through the volumetric (usage) rate
- Maintaining the balance between fixed and usage-based charges
- Concerns regarding the size of the increase

Finance Committee members expressed support for funding the additional expense through the usage rate. Discussion also included consideration of the W.R. Grace Fund as a potential source to offset the rate increase. Mr. Mostoller noted that use of the Grace Fund would require a separate vote and additional procedural steps. He also noted some funds were already being proposed to offset the increase in the operating budget.

Commissioners discussed the purpose of reserve funds and expressed concern about using them for short-term rate relief. It was noted that these funds are intended for long-term use and that using them now could reduce future financial flexibility. Relying on Special District meetings to cover emergencies is not a great operating model.

During this discussion, Rob Parenti asked whether the District would be able to present slides at the Special District Meeting and noted that clear visual presentation would be important given the need to explain the proposed changes.

Mr. Mostoller confirmed that presentation capability would be available and agreed on the importance of improving communication materials, including visual aids and written summaries. He is already preparing a similar document to the one used at the 2024 Special District Meeting.

Additional discussion included:

- The potential for increased funding of ongoing maintenance
- The importance of aligning rates with actual expenditures
- The need for clear and consistent communication with the public

Mr. Mostoller also noted that additional revenue adjustments may be considered, including changes to the fire protection fee and demand charges, and that these would be reviewed further. The Board agreed to continue discussion of both the budget and rate structure at the April 13, 2026 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Approve Warrant for Special District Meeting

Mr. Mostoller presented the draft warrant for the Special District Meeting, which included a single article to raise and appropriate funds for district operations.

The Board took the following actions:

1. Call the Special District Meeting

Ms. Lin made a motion to call a Special District Meeting on Wednesday, April 22, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at the Acton Water District offices. Mr. Stuntz seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

2. Close the Warrant

Mr. Rosen made a motion to close the warrant. Ms. Lin seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

3. Approve the Warrant

Mr. Rosen made a motion to approve the warrant. Ms. Lin seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Mr. Mostoller and Mr. Robb will coordinate to have the warrant certified and posted in accordance with the required timelines.

The Board also discussed public outreach efforts, including preparation of explanatory materials and initiating communication with the public prior to the meeting. A motion was approved authorizing Mr. Mostoller to draft and submit to the *Acton Exchange* a public communication on behalf of the District.

The Finance Committee adjourned, followed by the Board of Commissioners.

The meeting closed at 4:43 p.m.

The next Board of Water Commissioners meeting is scheduled for April 13, 2026.

Acton Water District - PWS 2002000

Summary of Treated Water Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) 2026

Sample Date	Sample Location			
	Clapp/Whitcomb WTP	Central Acton WTP	North Acton WTP	South Acton WTP
January 7, 2026	Not Sampled	Not Sampled	Not Sampled	15.2
January 13, 2026	Not Sampled	Not Sampled	3	Not Sampled
January 28, 2026	Not Sampled	11.6	Not Sampled	Not Sampled
February 4, 2026	Not Sampled	12.5	2.9	Not Sampled
February 18, 2026	Not Sampled	Not Sampled	Not Sampled	14
February 26, 2026	Not Sampled	Not Sampled	Not Sampled	ND
March 18, 2026	Not Sampled	13.8	Not Sampled	ND

Notes:

WTP = Water Treatment Plant

Units are in parts per trillion (ppt) or ng/L

ND = below method detection limit

Not Sampled = PFAS samples are not collected at each WTP on the same date or when a WTP is not producing water for consumption

Results provided are the sum of 6 PFAS Compounds - PFOA, PFOS, PFNA, PFHxS, PFHpA, and PFDA

Exceeds Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 20 ppt or ng/L

All treated water data is shared with consumers to be transparent. Not all of the data presented here will meet MassDEP data acceptance standards.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Middlesex, ss.



To the Clerk of the Water Supply District of Acton, GREETINGS:

You are directed to notify the legal voters of the Town of Acton, as aforesaid, to assemble at:

**Water Supply District of Acton
693 Massachusetts Avenue
Acton, Massachusetts 01720**

**On Wednesday, April 22, 2026
7:00 P.M.**

Then and there to Act on the following Article:

Article 1. To see what sums of money the District will vote to raise and appropriate to defray the usual expenses of the District.

Hereof fail not and make due returns of this Warrant with your doings thereon to the Water Commissioners on or before the time of holding of said meeting.

Given under our hand this 3rd day of April in the year two thousand and twenty-six.

Stephen C. Stuntz
Erika Lin
Barry Rosen, Water Commissioners

A true copy. ATTEST:

Joe Robb
District Clerk

Article 1.

Commissioner: Stephen Stuntz

Finance Committee: William Guthlein

Option A)

Mr. Stuntz moves that the District raise and appropriate the sum of \$8,580,431, for the fiscal year 2027 budget, as presented to voters, to defray the usual expenses of the District.

Option B)

Mr. Stuntz moves that the District raise and appropriate the sum of \$9,568,431, for the fiscal year 2027 budget, as presented to voters, to defray the usual expenses of the District.

Majority Vote Required

DRAFT

From: [Matt Mostoller](#)
To: [sstuntz@acornlab.com](#); [Barry Rosen](#); [erika@erikaamirlin.com](#); [WILLIAM J GUTHLEIN](#); [John Petersen](#)
Cc: [Ashley Pinard](#); [Corey Godfrey](#); [Spencer Holland \(sholland@miricklaw.com\)](#)
Subject: FY 27 Budget Memo
Date: Friday, April 10, 2026 9:46:00 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[FY 27 Budget for SDM.pdf](#)
[4 Approved Budget FY 27.pdf](#)
[Median Bill Rate Comparison.pdf](#)

Good morning,

I want to start by expressing my sincere gratitude to the entire staff, who are working to understand where we are as an organization, while also trying to forge a path forward. For anyone questioning the current state of morale amongst staff, the politicizing of the budget approval process is taking a toll and will have lasting impacts on the District. I would especially like to recognize Ashley, Corey, and Bob, who are processing the information needed to support a reasonable and responsible approach to funding the increasing needs of running the District while ensuring the District continues to serve the community day in and day out. The past three weeks have presented a unique opportunity to revisit the budget, utilize updated data, and include two critical emerging issues: the sources of supply in North Acton and emerging signs of issues with our legacy metering system. I am working on updated budget documents but want to be sure we get the information right, instead of rushing to get detailed data out.

To satisfy the request of the Finance Committee, Ashley has dived headfirst into the workings of the Grace Fund. Since the initial budget and warrant did not include any new proposed uses of this fund, it was not a priority for Ashley to master until early this week. The two of us have been working with Christine and CapTrust to rapidly get up to speed. Here is the fund status as of 3/30/26.

Available for Appropriation: \$470,293.93

Reserved for Wells: \$100,000

Reserved for M&O: \$208,577.56

Net Position: \$778,931.49

The budget itself has evolved since the last meeting on 4/3. I am no longer able to support a recommendation to offer more than two budget alternatives other than the exact expenses voted down already or the proposal that follows. This would be expenses totaling **\$8,580,431** in the original budget request and **\$9,568,431** in the proposal below.

To do something more before the Special District meeting and communicate to the voters, is not possible. The changes in expenses are as follows:

1. Adds \$200k to meters to accelerate replacement.
2. Moves \$17k in active employee healthcare cost savings (based on actual increases for FY27) to salary and wages to support that line item.
3. Adds \$888k towards repairing/replacing wells in North Acton (increase due to lower projected funds previously appropriated).
4. Reduces M&O by \$100k to reflect investment in North Acton Wells (will result in other deferred maintenance).

This necessitates an increase in the variable rates of 13% across all tiers. In the original budget proposal, the tiered rates were proposed to remain flat for FY27. With the benefit of more time, we have reviewed the assumptions on the debt fee as well and have heard the concern expressed by the voters at Annual Meeting. As a result of Powdermill Place coming online, the unit count can reliably be raised to 9,100 units for budget planning purposes, instead of 8,900. This results in an increase in the anticipated service fee revenue and allowed us to revisit the proposed debt fee for FY 27. The budget being presented for consideration at the Special District Meeting, has the same debt expense but currently results in a proposed \$83 debt fee, a \$2.25 reduction per unit per quarter. This combination of rate and fee changes, along with a change in the annual fire protection fee becoming a quarterly fee, will still result in a potential \$327,882 surplus going into the next fiscal year, which we believe is a prudent measure. If demand charges increase, we could also see a surplus generated from that revenue stream as well.

Since the dialogue has beaten around the bush of affordability, I would like to offer the following on how our proposed rates and fees compare in terms of affordability. There is a wide range of median household incomes throughout Acton, from a low of \$68,581 in one neighborhood to a high of \$250,001 in another neighborhood. However, the relationship between median household income and median water bills is pretty flat, with an increase of just \$0.0003 for each additional \$1 of income. For example, the median annual water bill in the \$68,581 neighborhood is \$675.44 and the median annual water bill in the \$250,001 neighborhood is \$685.33. Less than a \$10 difference in annual water bills for a difference in household incomes of \$181,420. To put all of this in context, EPA defines water as affordable if it represents less than 2.5% of household income. Median water bills relative to median household income in Acton as a whole is 0.6%, ranging from 0.3% to 1.0% between Acton's 16 neighborhoods (as defined by US Census Block Groups). Corey has updated the fixed/variable breakdown in the attached charts, and the proposed FY 27 more closely reflects the current breakdown in FY 26 than the original FY 27 proposal.

I am hopeful that the Board and Finance Committee can support the revised FY 27 budget on Monday night and adopt the rate and fee changes. This will enable us to include the explanation and impacts to customers in a mailing ahead of the Special District Meeting. Codifying these changes now, also enables us to appropriately capture that revenue as soon as we turn the fiscal year on July 1st.

Thank you for your patience as we worked through the hours of dialogue and communication with you, the voters, and each other to come up with the above proposal.

-Matt

Matthew Mostoller

District Manager

Water Supply District of Acton

693 Massachusetts Avenue

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FY 2027 Budget and Estimated Revenue

	Actual FY 25	Budget FY 26	6 month actual	Budget FY 27
EXPENSES				
Audit/Accounting	16,000	28,000	20,600	35,000
Auto Maint & Fuel	53,560	75,000	18,282	75,000
Short Term Debt	258,639	-	-	-
Long Term Debt	1,959,978	2,255,740	441,429	3,032,586
Chemicals	122,802	184,800	78,520	190,344
DEP Withdrawal	4,791	5,000	4,583	5,000
Employee Education	8,028	17,500	13,794	17,500
Engineering	53,305	60,000	12,646	60,000
Health/Life Insurance Active	204,164	295,601	129,580	330,190
Health/Life Insurance Retiree	113,824	131,121	61,493	181,150
Information Reports	11,120	40,000	1,571	40,000
Insurance	110,593	141,650	128,765	169,980
Laboratory Analysis	77,887	85,000	55,192	89,250
Legal	58,185	110,000	22,477	110,000
Lights/Power/Fuel	600,000	600,000	313,847	660,000
Maintenance & Operations	535,403	750,000	374,397	750,000
Media Replacement	-	100,000	-	-
NAWTP PFAS Filter Lease	315,311	322,000	160,828	-
Middlesex Retirement	354,740	397,791	397,791	438,431
Meters	124,715	400,000	67,320	400,000
Office Supplies & Postage	41,622	50,000	19,484	50,000
Software Subscriptions/ IT Maintenance	46,067	125,000	44,778	100,000
Telephone	21,000	21,000	11,097	21,000
Reserve Fund	69,391	100,000	-	100,000
Salaries & Wages	1,443,969	1,675,000	797,739	1,725,000
Vehicle	-	60,000	-	-
Total	6,605,094	8,030,203	3,176,215	8,580,431
REVENUE				
Water Revenue	4,471,297	4,602,230	2,595,192	4,577,973
Service Fee	537,810	534,000	269,325	534,000
Debt Fee	2,366,364	2,260,600	1,140,143	3,034,900
Total Water Revenue	7,375,471	7,396,830	4,004,659	8,146,873
Fire Protection Sprinklers	42,939	41,000	41,177	41,000
Rent/Lease	143,763	115,000	67,577	115,000
Solar Field lease revenue	372,500	385,000	-	385,000
Repairs/Installation	23,344	50,000	14,669	50,000
Cross Connection	23,797	21,000	16,628	21,000
Demand Fees	245,600	250,000	38,100	150,000
Mitigation Fees	235,060	-	7,905	-
New Services Meter Installation RF	12,164	-	9,389	-
Total Other Revenue	1,099,167	862,000	195,445	762,000
Total	8,474,637	8,258,830	4,200,104	8,908,873

FY 2027 Budget and Estimated Revenue

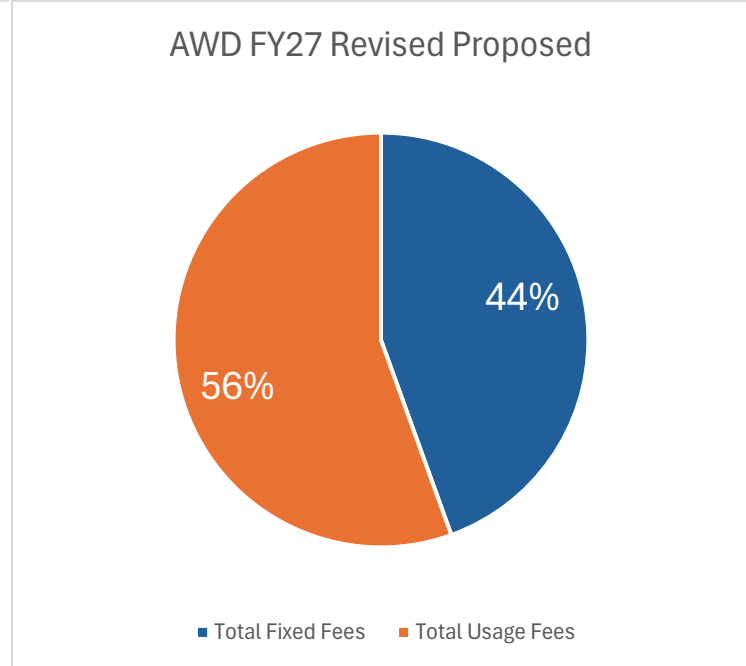
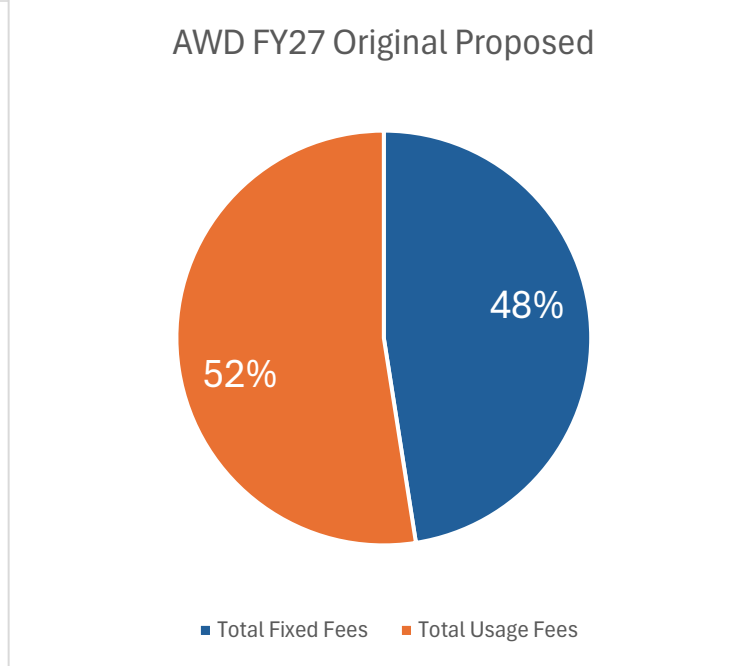
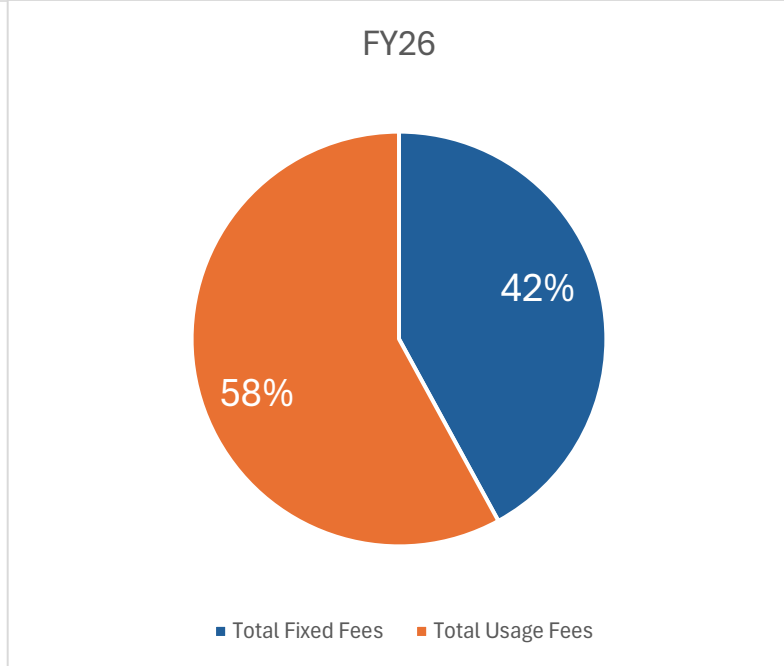
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Vehicle	-	60,000	-	-
Well Maintenance/Replacement				888,000
Total	6,605,094	8,030,203	3,176,215	9,568,431
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Total Other Revenue	1,099,167	862,000	195,445	885,000
Total	8,474,637	8,258,830	4,200,104	9,896,313

		FY26		AWD FY27 Original Proposed		AWD FY27 Revised Proposed	
Debt	\$	254.00	34%	\$332.00	40%	\$332.00	38%
Service	\$	60.00	8%	\$60.00	7%	\$60.00	7%
Total Fixed Fees	\$	314.00	42%	\$392.00	48%	\$392.00	44%
Total Usage Fees	\$	432.86	58%	\$432.86	52%	\$489.14	56%
Total Annual	\$	746.86		\$824.86		\$881.14	

Median Quarterly Water Use

Winter	1380 cu ft
Summer	1647 cu ft

Current Rates	No Rate Increase				13% Rate Increase			
	Jun/Sept Summer	Mar/Dec Winter	Jun/Sept Summer	Mar/Dec Winter	Jun/Sept Summer	Mar/Dec Winter		
Service Charge	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00		
Bond Debt Fee	\$63.50	\$63.50	\$83.00	\$83.00	\$83.00	\$83.00		
Between 0 and 300	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
If Greater than 300								
All Usage up to 1500	0.076	0.064	0.076	0.064	0.086	0.072		
Between 1501 and 3000	0.096	0.082	0.096	0.082	0.108	0.093		
Between 3001 and 4500	0.113	0.101	0.113	0.101	0.128	0.114		
Between 4501 and 6000	0.132	0.119	0.132	0.119	0.149	0.134		
Greater than 6000	0.150	0.138	0.150	0.138	0.170	0.156		
Municipal	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.093	0.093		



**Water Rates and Demand Charges
RATES AND DEMAND CHARGES**

Appendix (A-1) WATER

The following inclining block rate structure was adopted effective **July 2026**. Meters will be read in March, June, September and December and water bills will be mailed as soon as reading is complete. A quarterly service charge of \$15.00 per unit and a Debt Fee of **\$83.00** per unit will be applied to all accounts.

Current Rates Per Unit		
	Summer	Winter
Service Charge	\$15.00	\$15.00
Debt Fee	\$83.00	\$83.00
Fire Sprinkler Fee	\$250.00	\$250.00
Between 0 and 300 cubic feet (cf)	0.000	0.000
If Greater than 300:		
All Usage up to 1500 cf	0.086	0.072
Between 1501 cf and 3000 cf	0.108	0.093
Between 3001 cf and 4500 cf	0.128	0.114
Between 4501 cf and 6000 cf	0.149	0.134
Greater than 6000 cf	0.170	0.156
Municipal	0.093	0.093

Demand charge schedule is set forth as follows:

PIPE SIZE	DEMAND CHARGE (\$)
1 inch	14,300.00
1 1/2 inch	44,473.00
2 inch	88,803.00
3 inch	243,243.00
4 inch	400,686.00
6 inch	1,616,615.00
Multi-unit served by single pipe (per apartment, ADU, living/tenant unit)	6,400.00

SPRINKLER DEMAND CHARGES (\$)

Buildings up to 20,000 sq ft	4,000.00
Buildings between 20,000 and 40,000 sq ft	8,000.00
Buildings between 40,000 and 60,000 sq ft	12,000.00
Buildings between 60,000 and 80,000 sq ft	16,000.00
Buildings over 80,000 sq ft	4,000 per each 20,000 sq ft

Mitigation Fee is \$5 per gallon of projected use and will be calculated prior to ANY work being done. Mitigation Fee and Demand Charge will be paid in full at time of application approval.

Miscellaneous Charges

Labor @ \$50.00 Per Hour
Labor @ \$75.00 Per Hour Nights & Weekends
Compressor @ \$75.00 Per Hour
Backhoe @ \$150.00 Per Hour
Backhoe @ \$175.00 Per Hour Nights & Weekends
Inspector @ \$75.00 Per Hour
Inspector @ \$100.00 Per Hour Nights & Weekends

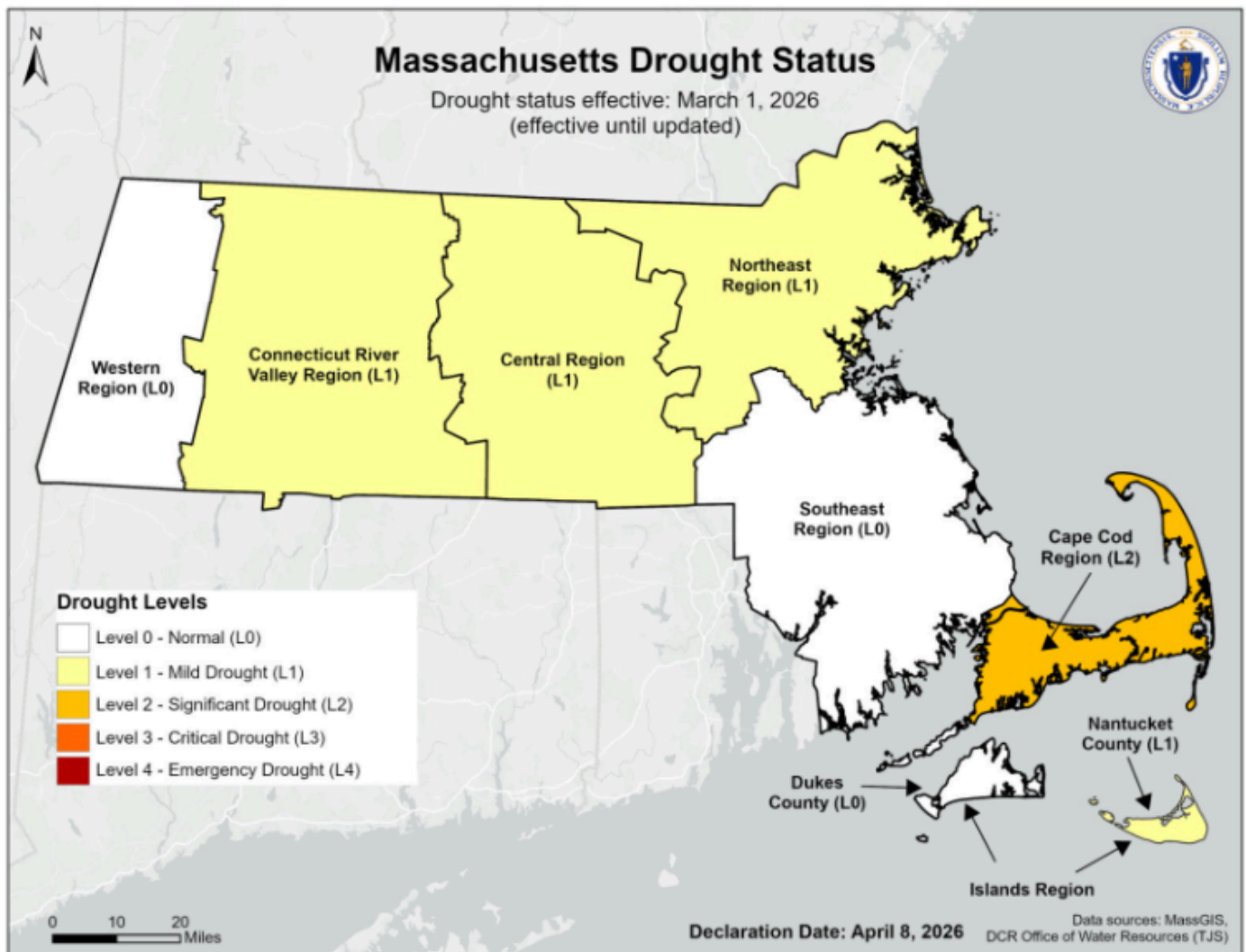


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Drought Status

Find out the current drought status in Massachusetts, learn about past droughts and find past drought declaration maps.

Current Drought Status



*The drought levels shown in the map above are in effect until the next drought declaration

April 8, 2026:

Today, Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Rebecca Tepper declared the Normal conditions have returned to the Southeast and Western Regions of the state. The Connecticut River Valley, Central, Northeast, and Nantucket County Regions have improved to a Level-1 Mild Drought. The Cape Region remains in a Level 2-Significant Drought.

During March, Massachusetts received approximately 3 to 5.5 inches of precipitation, which is normal for this time of year. Some areas – like Essex, Middlesex, Dukes, and Nantucket Counties – got less than normal, about 0.5 to 1.5 inches below average.

The current drought, which began in 2024, has had impacts on the natural environment and declining groundwater but with recent increases in precipitation and snow melt, drought indices are improving all around. Although local water supplies are currently stable, as the drought continues to persist and with the growing season and higher water demand season is before us, it is prudent for all to continue to be very conservative and save water whenever possible.

As outlined in the [Massachusetts Drought Management Plan](/doc/massachusetts-drought-management-plan/download) (</doc/massachusetts-drought-management-plan/download>), continued detailed monitoring of drought conditions must continue. The drought levels also require ongoing coordination among state and federal agencies to implement drought response actions such as water-use restrictions. Additionally, engagement with municipalities, including local Boards of Health (BOH), is essential. This includes providing technical outreach and assistance to water suppliers and affected municipalities. Residents are asked to report to their local BOH if wells drying up; BOHs are asked to [report on the condition of local private wells](https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=Fh2GPrdIDkqYBowE2Bt7KrlZu5Ea_-9PgVk0nQG_ICpURTNVTkNGNjI0V0xYTTRDWEY5RjJYTEExLTC4u&route=shorturl) (https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=Fh2GPrdIDkqYBowE2Bt7KrlZu5Ea_-9PgVk0nQG_ICpURTNVTkNGNjI0V0xYTTRDWEY5RjJYTEExLTC4u&route=shorturl).

Residents can report dry environmental conditions and submit photos to help monitor the situation on the [Massachusetts Water Impact Reporter \(/wir\)](https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/55e12399904742afab7d7cc5fca0ea18). (<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/55e12399904742afab7d7cc5fca0ea18>) Additionally, a [FAQ \(/info-details/202425-drought-frequently-asked-questions-faqs\)](/info-details/202425-drought-frequently-asked-questions-faqs) is now available for questions regarding the current drought status and water conservation; and [private well owners can learn more \(/info-details/information-for-private-well-owners-during-a-drought\)](/info-details/information-for-private-well-owners-during-a-drought) for information on how the drought may impact them.

State agencies will continue to closely monitor and assess conditions across the state, coordinate any needed dissemination of information to the public, and help federal, state, and local agencies prepare additional responses that may be needed in the future. The DMTF will [meet \(/info-details/drought-management-task-force-meetings\)](/info-details/drought-management-task-force-meetings) again on May 7 at 10:00 AM. For further information on water conservation and what residents can do, visit the EEA's [drought \(/guides/drought-management-in-massachusetts\)](/guides/drought-management-in-massachusetts) and [water conservation \(/conservemawater\)](/conservemawater) pages.

Below are recommendations for communities and individuals living and working within a Level 1–Mild Drought and Level 2–Significant Drought Regions including those utilizing a private well. Residents and businesses are strongly urged to check with their local water system in case more stringent water restrictions are in place. Many systems may have other more severe local conditions and constraints on water supply.

For Regions in Level 2 – Significant Drought

Residents and Businesses:

- Minimize overall water use
- Follow local water use restrictions;
- For any upcoming outdoor water use, limit watering to hand-held hoses or watering cans, to be used only after 5 p.m. or before 9 a.m
- Fix indoor leaks, such as from toilets, faucets, and showers, which result in more than 60 percent of indoor use; and,

- For larger buildings and businesses, conduct water audits to identify areas of leaks and potential water conservation opportunities.

Immediate Steps for Communities/Municipalities:

- Limit or prohibit installation of new sod, seeding, and/or landscaping; watering during or within 48 hours after measurable rainfall; washing of hard surfaces (sidewalks, patios, driveways, siding); personal vehicle or boat washing; and,
- Establish water-use reduction targets for all water users, identify top water users and conduct targeted outreach to help curb their use.

Short- and Medium-Term Steps for Communities/Municipalities:

- Establish a year-round water conservation program that includes public education and communication, taking advantage of the state's [library of outreach materials](/info-details/water-resources-toolkit-library-of-outreach-materials)
- Provide timely information to local residents and businesses;
- Implement or establish drought surcharge or seasonal water rates;
- Check emergency inter-connections for water supply; and,
- Develop or refine your local drought management plan using guidance outlined in the state [Drought Management Plan](/doc/massachusetts-drought-management-plan/download)

For Regions in Level 1 – Mild Drought

Residents and Businesses:

- Minimize overall water use;
- Follow local water use restrictions;
- Fix indoor leaks, such as from toilets, faucets, and showers, which result in more than 60 percent of indoor use; and,

- For larger buildings and businesses, conduct water audits to identify areas of leaks and potential water conservation opportunities.

Communities/Municipalities:

- Limit or prohibit installation of new sod, seeding, and/or landscaping; watering during or within 48 hours after measurable rainfall; washing of hard surfaces (sidewalks, patios, driveways, siding); personal vehicle or boat washing; filling of swimming pools, hot tubs.
- Establish a year-round water conservation program that includes public education and communication, taking advantage of the state's [library of outreach materials](/info-details/water-resources-toolkit-library-of-outreach-materials) (/info-details/water-resources-toolkit-library-of-outreach-materials);
- Provide timely drought and water conservation information to residents and businesses;
- Check emergency inter-connections for water supply; and
- [Develop a local drought management plan](/guides/drought-planning-guidance) (/guides/drought-planning-guidance)

Past Droughts and Declaration

Drought History

The information in this [Drought Status History](/info-details/history-of-drought-declarations-in-massachusetts) (/info-details/history-of-drought-declarations-in-massachusetts) dates to 2001, when the Massachusetts Drought Management Plan was developed in response to a period of deficient precipitation that began in 1999. The most severe drought of modern times was the drought of the 1960s, equivalent to a drought emergency. A less severe drought occurred in the early 1980s.

The Commonwealth experienced another impactful drought in 2016-2017 with drought levels reaching Level 4 Drought (Warning) out of five levels of drought; the drought impacted the agricultural sector, some water supplies, the natural environment and many habitats and species. [Read more about the drought, how it fared and the state responses and actions](/doc/massachusetts-drought-retrospective-2016-2017/download) (/doc/massachusetts-drought-retrospective-2016-2017/download).

Additional Resources

[What should communities do during a drought](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drought-outreach-and-response#what-should-communities-do-during-a-drought?) (https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drought-outreach-and-response#what-should-communities-do-during-a-drought?)

[Precipitation Data](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/precipitation-data) (https://www.mass.gov/info-details/precipitation-data)

[Hydrologic Conditions Reports](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/water-data-tracking#hydrologic-conditions-reports-) (https://www.mass.gov/info-details/water-data-tracking#hydrologic-conditions-reports-)

[Average Precipitation Statistics](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/water-data-tracking#average-precipitation-statistics-) (https://www.mass.gov/info-details/water-data-tracking#average-precipitation-statistics-)

[Standardized Precipitation Index \(SPI\)](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/water-data-tracking#standardized-precipitation-index-(spi)-) (https://www.mass.gov/info-details/water-data-tracking#standardized-precipitation-index-(spi)-)

[Information for Private Well Owners](https://mass.gov/info-details/information-for-private-well-owners-during-a-drought) (https://mass.gov/info-details/information-for-private-well-owners-during-a-drought)

[Massachusetts Drought Management Plan](https://www.mass.gov/doc/massachusetts-drought-management-plan/download)

(https://www.mass.gov/doc/massachusetts-drought-management-plan/download)

(English, PDF 5.47 MB)

[State Organizations](/massachusetts-state-organizations) (/massachusetts-state-organizations)

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