

Steps you can take to reduce your exposure

Consider taking the following steps while we monitor, assess and address PFAS6:

- For older children and adults (not in a sensitive subgroup), 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 address PFAS6 concentrations in the water, use of bottled water (as long as it contains less PFAS6) will reduce your exposure.
- Home water treatment systems that are certified to remove PFAS by an independent testing group such as NSF, UL or the Water Quality Association may be effective in treating the water. These include point-of-entry systems, which will treat all the water entering a home, or point-of-use devices, which treat water where it is used, such as a faucet. For more information on selecting home treatment devices that are effective in treating the water for PFAS6 see the MassDEP fact sheet and web links 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.

Can our new treatment plant remove PFAS6?

Our greensand filtration plant cannot remove PFAS6 as it is currently configured. However, it can be expanded, at a capital expense, to remove PFAS by adding new filter vessels containing granular activated carbon and/or ion exchange resins.

The current facility was designed to remove iron & manganese and further reduce lead and copper corrosion of home plumbing materials. The plant's design incorporates a number of features that were included to meet potential future needs such as arsenic removal, stricter filtration requirements and longer disinfection contact times. PFAS treatment was not included because testing conducted in 2014 indicated PFAS concentrations were below detectable limits at that time. The plant was built and being commissioned when MassDEP announced their intent to regulate PFAS6 in January 2019 and the requirements did not take effect until October of 2020.

What is being done?

The following steps are being taken to address this issue:

- Our water is being tested on a monthly basis to monitor PFAS6 concentrations.
- The test results are being verified by multiple laboratories to ensure accuracy.
- A grant application was submitted to MassDEP requesting funding to pilot test various PFAS removal technologies during the spring of 2021. We expect to hear if the grant was awarded in January or early February of 2021.
- Our 5-year Capital Plan has been modified to include potential capital expenses tied to PFAS.
- The Town is working closely with MassDEP to understand and consider possible means to address elevated levels.
- You will receive PFAS information, much like this document, on a quarterly basis until further notice. Additional information concerning PFAS is being added to our website.

We have scheduled a public meeting so residents can ask questions and obtain more information from Town & MassDEP staff. The meeting will be held via Zoom on February 10, 2021 at 6:30 PM (Meeting ID: 844 9933 6261 Passcode: 425733). Please visit our website - www.topsfieldpublicworks.org or contact the Water Department at (978) 887-1517 for more details.

For more information

Please contact Greg Krom, Water Superintendent at (978) 887-1517, gkrom@topsfield-ma.gov or 279 Boston Street, Topsfield, MA 01983 if you have any questions. Additional information concerning PFAS is available on our website - <https://www.topsfieldpublicworks.org>. Testing data for PFAS6, along with other data, are regularly posted on our water quality site: <https://www.topsfieldpublicworks.org/apps/watertesting/>.

These state and federal resources are also available:

- MassDEP Fact Sheet - Questions and Answers for Consumers - <https://www.mass.gov/media/1854351>
- MassDEP Fact Sheet - Home Water Treatment Devices - Point of Entry and Point of Use Drinking Water Treatment - <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/home-water-treatment-devices-point-of-entry-and-point-of-use-drinking-water>
- CDC ATSDR Information on PFAS for consumers and health professionals - <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>