



Department of Public Works
Water Division

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER Haloacetic Acid 5 (HAA5) MCL Violation at Dartmouth Water Division

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard. Although **this incident was not an emergency**, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Testing results from November 2021 show that our system exceeded the standard or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for HAA5. The standard for HAA5 is 60 parts per billion (ppb). **It is determined by averaging all samples collected at each sampling location for the past 12 months.** The level of HAA5 **averaged** at our system's Reed Road location for November was 64 parts per billion (ppb). Although the sample results improved for this site, it was not enough to reduce the 12 month average below the standard.

What does this mean?

You are advised that the water can continue to be consumed as usual. This is not an emergency. If it had been an emergency, you would have been notified within 24 hours. HAA5 are five haloacetic acid compounds, which form when disinfectants react with natural organic matter in the water. **Please see the next page for further clarification on what this notification means for you.**

What should I do?

- If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water.
- There is nothing you need to do. **You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions.** If a situation arises where the water is no longer safe to drink, you will be notified within 24 hours.

People who drink water containing haloacetic acids in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer. Please see <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/haa5-in-drinking-water-information-for-consumers> for a fact sheet on HAA5s.

What is being done?

It is important to note that the sample collected in November fell well under the standard for HAA5. This violation is only occurring due to the State requirement that a 12 month average be utilized. The Town completed the conversion from chlorine to chloramines as a means of disinfecting our water in March of 2021. It is apparent that the Town's comprehensive plan has been effective in improving water quality concerns and improvements will continue. Once warmer weather arrives, daily flushing for this location will be reinstated. This will increase the flow in this area and decrease the likelihood of increased HAA5 levels. For more information, please see the next page of this notification and/or contact Steven Sullivan at 508-999-0742, smsullivan@town.dartmouth.ma.us.

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.

What Does This “Haloacetic Acid 5 (HAA5) MCL Violation at Dartmouth Water Division” Notification Mean?

Why Am I Receiving This Notice?

- We regularly sample our drinking water at four locations throughout the Town to test for the presence of water contaminants, as part of the Town’s comprehensive water quality testing program. During our routinely scheduled November tests, one of the four locations had a sample come back that triggered a HAA5 violation. These samples are taken every three months (February, May, August, & November).
- It is important to note that samples are computed utilizing a 12 month average of samples for each location. What this means is that ***the November sample actually came in at 31 parts per billion, which is far less than the maximum of 60 parts per billion set by State and Federal guidelines.*** Due to higher samples in the past, the average still remains above the 60 parts per billion standard. Please see the chart below for HAA5 levels of the last four samples collected from the Reed Road location:

| Date: | February 3, 2021 | May 11, 2021 | August 4, 2021 | November 9, 2021 |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| Sample (parts per billion): | 42ppb | 110ppb | 74ppb | 31ppb |
| 12 Month Average (parts per billion) | 56ppb | 63ppb | 72ppb | 64ppb |

- Following State and Federal guidelines, we are required to send this notification to all municipal water users in Dartmouth. Only those customers being serviced in the greater Reed Road area of Town are affected by this notice.

What Are Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)?

- Haloacetic acids (HAA) are a group of disinfection byproducts that form when chlorine compounds that are used to disinfect water react with other naturally-occurring chemicals in the water.

Where?

- This sample was collected at our system’s location on Reed Road.

What Do I Need to Know?

- If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water.
- People whom drink water containing HAA5 in excess of the maximum contaminant level (set at 60 parts per billion) over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

Why Did This Happen & What is Being Done?

- The Town has transitioned from using chlorine to chloramines as of March of 2021 as a way to disinfect our water. The transition to chloramines is designed to reduce levels of HAA5, and has been highly effective in doing so (see the chart above for sample data). This transition can take a considerable amount of time to move throughout the entire water system. The location where this irregular sample was collected is located in a portion of Town that has a low volume of municipal water users. With that being said, there is not a significant amount of water moving through this part of the system and the full transition to chloramines can take an extended amount of time. Once warmer weather arrives, we will reinstitute daily flushing. This will move water through the system at a faster rate and speed up the full transition to chloramines.
- This most recent sample, with a HAA5 level of 31ppb, appears to show that the transition to Chloramines has been successful in reducing levels of HAA5. We expect that future samples will continue to be in compliance, but our 12 month average will need to fall below 60 parts per billion in order to avoid future violations.