

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Swift River School has levels of PFAS6 above the Drinking Water Standard

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.

What happened?

Our water system had a PFAS6 result that exceeded the PFAS6 MCL drinking water standard, for the period July to September 2023.

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 did and are doing to correct this situation.

On October 2, 2020, the 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). Our water system proactively and voluntarily sampled for PFAS6 before the date (October 2021) required in the new regulations. PFAS contaminants have been detected in our drinking water above the MCL since February 2021. See our latest results for Quarter 3, 2023 in the table below.

PFAS6 Results for Well 1 (01G)					
Quarterly Compliance Period	Monitoring Period	Sample Collection Date	PFAS6 Result (ng/L)	PFAS6 Quarterly Average (ng/L)	PFAS6 MCL (ng/L)
Quarter 1, 2022	Month 1	1/4/22	43.3	34	20
	Month 2	2/1/22	17		
	Month 3	3/9/22	40.4		
Quarter 2, 2022	Month 1	4/12/22	33.8	34	20
	Month 2	5/3/22	35.6		
	Month 3	6/7/22	33.5		
Quarter 3, 2022	Month 1	7/5/22	45.3	50	20
	Month 2	8/9/22	32.9		
	Month 3	9/13/22	71.7		
Quarter 4, 2022	Month 1	10/3/22	47.9	45	20
	Month 2	11/1/22	43.2		
	Month 3	12/6/22	45.0		
Quarter 1, 2023	Month 1	1/10/23	40.4	35	20
	Month 2	2/7/23	34.6		
	Month 3	3/6/23	29.9		
Quarter 2, 2023	Month 1	4/3/23	29.6	31	20
	Month 2	5/1/23	29.2		
	Month 3	6/5/23	32.7		
Quarter 3, 2023	Month 1	7/5/23	35.7	37	20
	Month 2	8/1/23	38.6		
	Month 3	9/12/23	36.6		

Our Quarter 3, 2023 results are above the MCL for PFAS6. An MCL is the maximum permissible level of a contaminant in water which is delivered to any user of a public water system. Even though we have been notifying you of our results since we began collecting samples, to comply with the new drinking water regulation, we must provide you with this public notice. The data from Quarter 3, 2023 has been added since the last notice was distributed.

Some people who drink water containing PFAS6 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 PFAS6 may also elevate the risk of certain cancers. For more information on PFAS, see the links 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 should I 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 (pregnant or nursing women, infants and people diagnosed by their health care provider to have a compromised immune system), 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 the company has been licensed to sell or distribute bottled water in Massachusetts and therefore has been tested for PFAS.** A list of these companies can be found on MassDEP's website at:
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas#bottled-water-and-home-water-filters->

For all other consumers not in a sensitive subgroup:

- **If you are not in a sensitive subgroup**, you may continue to consume the water because 20 ng/L value is applicable to a lifetime consuming the water and shorter duration exposures present less risk.
- **If you have specific health concerns regarding your past exposure**, you should see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) link below and consult a health professional, such as your doctor.

Steps you can take to reduce your intake - Consider taking the following steps while actions are being implemented to address this issue:

- **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 lower the PFAS6 concentration in the drinking water, use of bottled water will reduce your exposure.
- **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?

Swift River School is taking the following measures:

- We will continue to sample our water for PFAS every month.
- We are providing bottled water for use by those in sensitive subgroups.
- The Towns of Wendell and New Salem voted to support installing treatment to remove PFAS at the school and have contracted with an engineering firm to permit and install a PFAS treatment system, in consultation with MassDEP.

- MassDEP approved a permit to install the PFAS treatment system in February 2023. We plan to install the PFAS treatment system in the fall of 2023.
- When additional information becomes available, this public notice will be updated.

If you are concerned about PFAS exposure and you are using the Swift River School building, you should plan on supplying your own bottled water from home until further notice.

Where can I get more information?

Contact Stuart Harkins, Certified Operator, at sharkins@rhwhite.com or 888-377-7678.

See also the weblinks listed below.

- [**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>

This public education material is being sent to you by:

Swift River School in New Salem

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We will provide public notice updates every three months until the situation has been resolved.

Please share this information with other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly.

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