

TOWN OF IPSWICH UTILITIES DEPARTMENT



272 HIGH STREET • IPSWICH, MA 01938 • (978) 356-6635 • WWW.IPSWICHUTILITIES.ORG

April 5, 2021

Dear Customers,

As new challenges to drinking water treatment emerge, the Ipswich Water Department remains vigilant in meeting the goals of source water protection, water conservation and community education, while continuing to serve the needs of all our water users.

The EPA is working with water suppliers and government regulators across the nation to closely monitoring a family of chemicals called per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) that have been detected in some public water supplies.

PFAS are a family of chemicals used for nonstick, stain-resistant and water-proof coatings, and in numerous consumer products, industrial applications and firefighting foams. Manufacturing of certain PFAS compounds was discontinued in the U.S. decades ago, but they may still be used in imported products. Although consumer products and food are the largest source of exposure to PFAS, according to MassDEP, PFAS are resilient and do not degrade easily. As a result, these compounds are widely found in the environment as products are disposed of and PFAS leach into the soil and water, finding its way into food and drinking water sources.

Recently, MassDEP issued a new drinking water regulation that limit the sum of six PFAS compounds (known as the PFAS6) to 20 nanograms per liter (ng/L), or 20 parts per trillion (ppt). The new state drinking water standard requires public water suppliers like us to test for the presence of PFAS.

As part of the Emergency Declaration issued by MassDEP due to the drought in 2020, the Town was required to conduct PFAS testing. Initial testing was completed in November 2020, with confirmatory testing completed in December 2020. Although some levels of PFAS were detected in our water sources, all test results were compliant with the state regulations.

The Town will continue to test for PFAS compounds per MassDEP's regulatory compliance monitoring schedule. The next round of testing is scheduled this month.

If you wish to learn more about PFAS, visit www.ipswichma.gov/913/PFAS or call our office at 978-356-6635.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vicki Halmen".

Vicki Halmen
Water & Wastewater Director