

# ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT

Reporting Year 2024



*Presented By*  
**Easton Water Division**



## Our Commitment

We are pleased to present to you this year's annual water quality report. This report is a snapshot of last year's water quality covering all testing performed between January 1 and December 31, 2024. Included are details about your source of water, what it contains, and how it compares to standards set by regulatory agencies. Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. We want you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We are committed to ensuring the quality of your water and providing you with this information, because informed customers are our best allies.

## Where Does My Water Come From?

Easton Water Division's source is a groundwater supply consisting of six gravel-packed wells and one wellfield. The wells are located throughout the town and pump between 325 and 1,000 gallons per minute. Easton's water is distributed to your home through a network of water mains more than 170 miles long and ranging in size from 4 to 16 inches in diameter. Currently we have 7,705 active services connected to our system.

## Important Health Information

There is no safe level of lead in drinking water. Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Some of the health effects to infants and children include decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can also result in new or worsened learning and behavior problems. The children of persons who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy may be at increased risk of these harmful health effects. Adults have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, and kidney or nervous system problems. Contact your health-care provider for more information about your risks.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health-care providers. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA)/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800) 426-4791 or [epa.gov/safewater](http://epa.gov/safewater).

## Why Save Water?

Although 80% of the Earth's surface is water, only 1% is suitable for drinking. The rest is either salt water or is permanently frozen, and we can't drink it, wash with it, or use it to water plants.

## What's a Cross-Connection?

Cross-connections that contaminate drinking water distribution lines are a major concern. A cross-connection is formed at any point where a drinking water line connects to equipment (boilers), systems containing chemicals (air-conditioning systems, fire sprinkler systems, irrigation systems), or water sources of questionable quality. Cross-connection contamination can occur when the pressure in the equipment or system is greater than the pressure inside the drinking water line (backpressure). Contamination can also occur when the pressure in the drinking water line drops due to fairly routine occurrences (main breaks, heavy water demand), causing contaminants to be sucked out from the equipment and into the drinking water line (backsiphonage).

Outside water taps and garden hoses tend to be the most common sources of cross-connection contamination at home. The garden hose creates a hazard when submerged in a swimming pool or attached to a chemical sprayer for weed killing. Garden hoses that are left lying on the ground may be contaminated by fertilizers, cesspools, or garden chemicals. Improperly installed valves in your toilet could also be a source of cross-connection contamination.

Community water supplies are continuously jeopardized by cross-connections unless appropriate valves, known as backflow prevention devices, are installed and maintained. We have surveyed industrial, commercial, and institutional facilities in the service area to make sure that potential cross-connections are identified and eliminated or protected by a backflow preventer. We also inspect and test backflow preventers to make sure that they provide maximum protection. For more information on backflow prevention, contact the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

## Water Treatment Process

We use calcium hydroxide (lime) and potassium hydroxide (KOH) for our corrosion control and pH adjustment. Sodium hypochlorite is added for the disinfection process to protect the water as it travels throughout the system. We also use ultraviolet at all our wells for the destruction of bacteria and viruses.

New treatment facilities have been built: a greensand filter plant on Red Mill Road to remove iron and manganese, three new resin filters for the removal of six per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS6) at Gary Lane Well 1, and two facilities on Washington Street at Wells 2 and 4.

## Lead in Home Plumbing

Lead can cause serious health effects in people of all ages, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and parts used in service lines and home plumbing. The Easton Water Division is responsible for providing high-quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in the plumbing in your home. Because lead levels may vary over time, lead exposure is possible even when your tap sampling results do not detect lead at one point in time.

You can help protect yourself and your family by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Using a filter certified by an American National Standards Institute-accredited certifier to reduce lead is effective in reducing lead exposures. Follow the instructions provided with the filter to ensure it is used properly. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Boiling does not remove lead from water.

Before using tap water for drinking, cooking, or making baby formula, flush your pipes for several minutes. You can do this by running your tap, taking a shower, or doing laundry or a load of dishes. If you have a lead service line (LSL) or galvanized service line requiring replacement, you may need to flush your pipes for a longer period. If you are concerned about lead and wish to have your water tested, contact the Easton Water Division at (508) 230-0850. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at [epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://epa.gov/safewater/lead).

To address lead in drinking water, public water systems were required to develop and maintain an inventory of service line materials by October 16, 2024. Developing an inventory and identifying the location of LSLs is the first step for beginning LSL replacement and protecting public health. The lead service inventory may be found at [easton.ma.us/departments/dpw/water\\_division/servicelineinventory.php](http://easton.ma.us/departments/dpw/water_division/servicelineinventory.php). Please contact us if you would like more information about the inventory or any lead sampling that has been done.

## Source Water Assessment and Protection

The Source Water Assessment and Protection (SWAP) program assesses the susceptibility of public water supplies to potential contamination by microbiological pathogens and chemicals. A susceptibility ranking of high was assigned to this system using the information collected during the assessment by DEP. The complete SWAP report is available at the Water Division office, 417 Bay Road. For more information, call Rich Tierney, Operations Manager, (508) 230-0850.

## Substances That Could Be in Water

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. EPA and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health.



The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Substances that may be present in source water include:

**Thousands have lived without love, not one without water.”**

-W.H. Auden

Microbial Contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, or wildlife;

Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or may result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming;

Pesticides and Herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses;

Organic Chemical Contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production and which may also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems;

Radioactive Contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or may be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

**QUESTIONS?** For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please call Rich Tierney, Operations Manager, at (508) 230-0850 or email [rtierney@easton.ma.us](mailto:rtierney@easton.ma.us).

## Test Results

Our water is monitored for many different kinds of substances on a very strict sampling schedule, and the water we deliver must meet specific health standards. Here, we only show those substances that were detected in our water (a complete list of all our analytical results is available upon request). Remember that detecting a substance does not mean the water is unsafe to drink; our goal is to keep all detects below their respective maximum allowed levels.



The state recommends monitoring for certain substances less than once per year because the concentrations of these substances do not change frequently. In these cases, the most recent sample data is included, along with the year in which the sample was taken.

REGULATED SUBSTANCES							
Substance (Unit of Measure)	Year Sampled	MCL [MRDL]	MCLG [MRDLG]	Amount Detected	Range Low-High	Violation	Typical Source
Combined Radium (pCi/L)	2021	5	0	0.403	ND–0.403	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Haloacetic Acids [HAAs] (ppb)	2024	60	NA	22.5	ND–22.5	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Nitrate (ppm)	2024	10	10	3.1	ND–3.1	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Perchlorate (ppb)	2022	2	NA	ND	NA	No	Inorganic chemicals used as oxidizers in solid propellants for rockets, missiles, fireworks, and explosives
PFAS6 (ppt)	2024	20	NA	15.2	ND–15.2	No	Discharges and emissions from industrial and manufacturing sources associated with the production or use of moisture- and oil-resistant coatings on fabrics and other materials; Use and disposal of firefighting foams
TTHMs [total trihalomethanes] (ppb)	2024	80	NA	32.2	1.25–32.2	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection

Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analyses from sample sites throughout the community

Substance (Unit of Measure)	Year Sampled	AL	MCLG	Amount Detected (90th %ile)	Range Low-High	Sites Above AL/Total Sites	Violation	Typical Source
Copper (ppm)	2024	1.3	1.3	0.33	ND–1.25	0/120	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Lead (ppb)	2024	15	0	20	ND–94	0/120	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits



## Definitions

**90th %ile:** Out of every 10 homes sampled, 9 were at or below this level. This number is compared to the Action Level to determine lead and copper compliance.

**AL (Action Level):** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

**MCL (Maximum Contaminant Level):** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

**MCLG (Maximum Contaminant Level Goal):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

**MRDL (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level):** The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

**MRDLG (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal):** The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

**NA:** Not applicable.

**ND (Not detected):** Indicates that the substance was not found by laboratory analysis.

**pCi/L (picocuries per liter):** A measure of radioactivity.

**ppb (parts per billion):** One part substance per billion parts water (or micrograms per liter).

**ppm (parts per million):** One part substance per million parts water (or milligrams per liter).

**ppt (parts per trillion):** One part substance per trillion parts water (or nanograms per liter).

**SMCL (Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level):** These standards are developed to protect aesthetic qualities of drinking water and are not health based.

## SECONDARY SUBSTANCES

Substance (Unit of Measure)	Year Sampled	SMCL	MCLG	Amount Detected	Range Low-High	Violation	Typical Source
Aluminum (ppb)	2024	200	NA	198	24–198	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Residual from some surface water treatment processes
Chloride (ppm)	2024	250	NA	59	14–59	No	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits
Iron (ppb)	2024	300	NA	56	ND–56	No	Leaching from natural deposits; Industrial wastes
Manganese (ppb)	2024	50 <sup>1</sup>	NA	77	ND–77	No	Leaching from natural deposits
pH (units)	2024	6.5–8.5	NA	7.70	6.88–7.70	No	Naturally occurring
Sulfate (ppm)	2024	250	NA	13	6.9–13	No	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits; Industrial wastes
Zinc (ppm)	2024	5	NA	ND	NA	No	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits; Industrial wastes

## UNREGULATED SUBSTANCES<sup>2</sup>

Substance (Unit of Measure)	Year Sampled	Amount Detected	Range Low-High	Typical Source
Bromodichloromethane (ppb)	2024	9.98	0.53–9.98	NA
Chloroform (ppb)	2024	9.85	ND–9.85	NA
Sodium (ppm)	2023	52	10–52	NA

## Water Conservation Tips

You can play a role in conserving water and saving yourself money in the process by becoming conscious of the amount of water your household is using and by looking for ways to use less whenever you can. It is not hard to conserve water. Here are a few tips:

- Automatic dishwashers use 15 gallons for every cycle, regardless of how many dishes are loaded. So get a run for your money and load it to capacity.
- Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth.
- Check every faucet in your home for leaks. Just a slow drip can waste 15 to 20 gallons a day. Fix it and you can save almost 6,000 gallons per year.
- Check your toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank. Watch for a few minutes to see if the color shows up in the bowl. It is not uncommon to lose up to 100 gallons a day from an invisible toilet leak. Fix it and you save more than 30,000 gallons a year.
- Use your water meter to detect hidden leaks. Simply turn off all taps and water using appliances. Then check the meter after 15 minutes. If it moved, you have a leak.



<sup>1</sup>Manganese is a naturally occurring mineral found in rocks, soil, groundwater, and surface water. Manganese is necessary for proper nutrition and part of a healthy diet, but it can have undesirable effects on certain sensitive populations at elevated concentrations. U.S. EPA and DEP have established public health advisory levels for manganese to protect against concerns of potential neurological effects.

<sup>2</sup>Unregulated contaminants are those for which the U.S. EPA has not established drinking water standards. The purpose of unregulated contaminant monitoring is to assist U.S. EPA in determining their occurrence in drinking water and whether future regulation is warranted.