



MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA

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To: Residents and Water System Customers of Manchester by the Sea
From: Chuck Dam, DPW Director

Date: Friday, March 31, 2023
Subject: PFAS Update

On March 14, 2023, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed National Drinking Water Standards for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). While the new EPA proposed standards are lower than the standards set by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in 2021, both utilize a similar approach to these chemicals. Please see the links for the announcement and explanation of the new proposed standards on the Town's PFAS website for additional information: <https://manchester.ma.us/777/PFAS>

The limits proposed by the EPA are lower than the standards previously set by DEP. Should the proposed standards become law, DEP would also adopt the lower thresholds for determining compliance for Massachusetts Public Water Suppliers. As currently proposed, the Town's Lincoln Street Well would be out of compliance with the lower standards. It is unclear if the Gravelly Pond finished water would be out of compliance, however we have had individual samples test above the proposed standards as well (note: all test results are posted on the Town's PFAS website linked above). Based on the current understanding the Town would have three years to come into compliance after promulgation, which could be by early 2027. EPA will establish this deadline when the law is promulgated.

DPW had already engaged a consultant to consider treatment possibilities for the Lincoln Street Well, and we are currently using the same consultant for consideration of additional treatment options for Gravelly Pond, and/or potentially combining the water sources for treatment of PFAS at one location (likely the facility at Gravelly Pond). The completed study is also available at the above link; the current work is in its beginning stages and updates will be posted on the webpage as they become available. The cost of completing this work will likely be in the tens of millions of dollars and take at least the few years until the 2027 deadline to complete study, design, permitting and construction of the necessary treatment. While some state and federal money may be available for loans and/or grants, we do not have any awards pending. We will continue to pursue all funding options available.

The Town will continue to update the website with testing results and other information as we receive it. We appreciate your support as our understanding of the impacts of these PFAS standards to our public water system evolves. It is important to note that nothing from our source water, treatment process, or distribution system has demonstrably changed for many years with respect to PFAS; it is only the ability to test for these substances at these microscopic limits (parts per trillion) and continued research on the subject necessitating these changes at this time. We will continue to follow the best available information and implement any required changes to our processes. As always, please stop by or call 978-526-1242 with any additional questions.