

PFAS Chemicals in Duxbury Water: What you need to know

(Vote “Yes” on Article 14 to approve PFAS Monitoring & Sampling at Town Transfer Station)

What are PFAS?

- PFAS stands for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances—sometimes called “forever chemicals”—which are a group of man-made chemicals that have been widely used in many industrial and consumer products since the 1950s.
- PFAS chemicals can enter the environment and contaminate drinking water sources through various means, including industrial discharges, firefighting foam, and landfills.

What are the risks of PFAS?

- Exposure to PFAS can have adverse health effects, including developmental effects on fetuses and infants, cancer, and effects on the liver, thyroid, and immune system.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set a health advisory level for PFAS in drinking water at 70 parts per trillion (ppt), but Massachusetts has set lower limits at 20ppt and is expected to lower them even further in early 2023.
- The EPA recently issued an advisory opinion indicating that “there are no safe levels of PFAS.”

What’s the status of PFAS in Duxbury town water?

- Duxbury conducted testing of all town wells in 2021. The Partridge Street well had levels exceeding the Massachusetts DEP limit and was subsequently shut off.
- The rest of the town wells all had detectable—but much lower—levels of PFAS.
- Duxbury has commissioned a consultant (Weston & Sampson) to determine the source(s) of the PFAS, which study is actively in progress. In Fall 2022, Special Town Meeting approved funding to install an advanced filtration system on the Partridge Street well. The town is exploring ways to outfit all town wells with PFAS-removing filtration systems.

What steps should I take as a town resident?

- Follow Duxbury Safe Water Committee, Inc., on social media or join our e-newsletter by going to duxburysafewater.org (or scanning the QR code below) to keep abreast of updates, ask questions, and find additional resources on topics like home filtration systems.
- If you have a private well, contact the town of Duxbury to ensure that you are on record as having a private well and to learn about your options for testing. Through a state program, you can have your well tested for about \$300.
- At Town Meeting on 03/11/2023, vote YES to approve ARTICLE 14 – PFAS MONITORING AND SAMPLING AT THE TOWN TRANSFER STATION
- Don't boil your water. Boiling water that contains PFOA/PFOS will actually concentrate the contaminant.

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