



# Free PFAS Testing in Massachusetts Private Wells M H O A February 2022

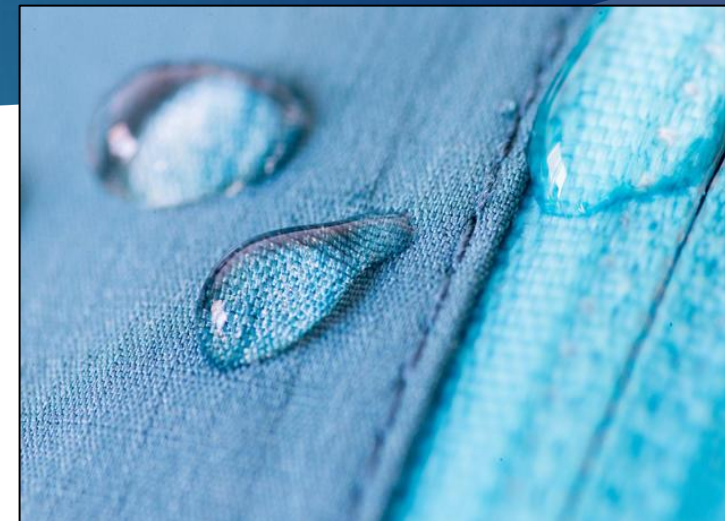
FREE TESTING OFFERED BY THE MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DRINKING WATER PROGRAM



UMass **Amherst**

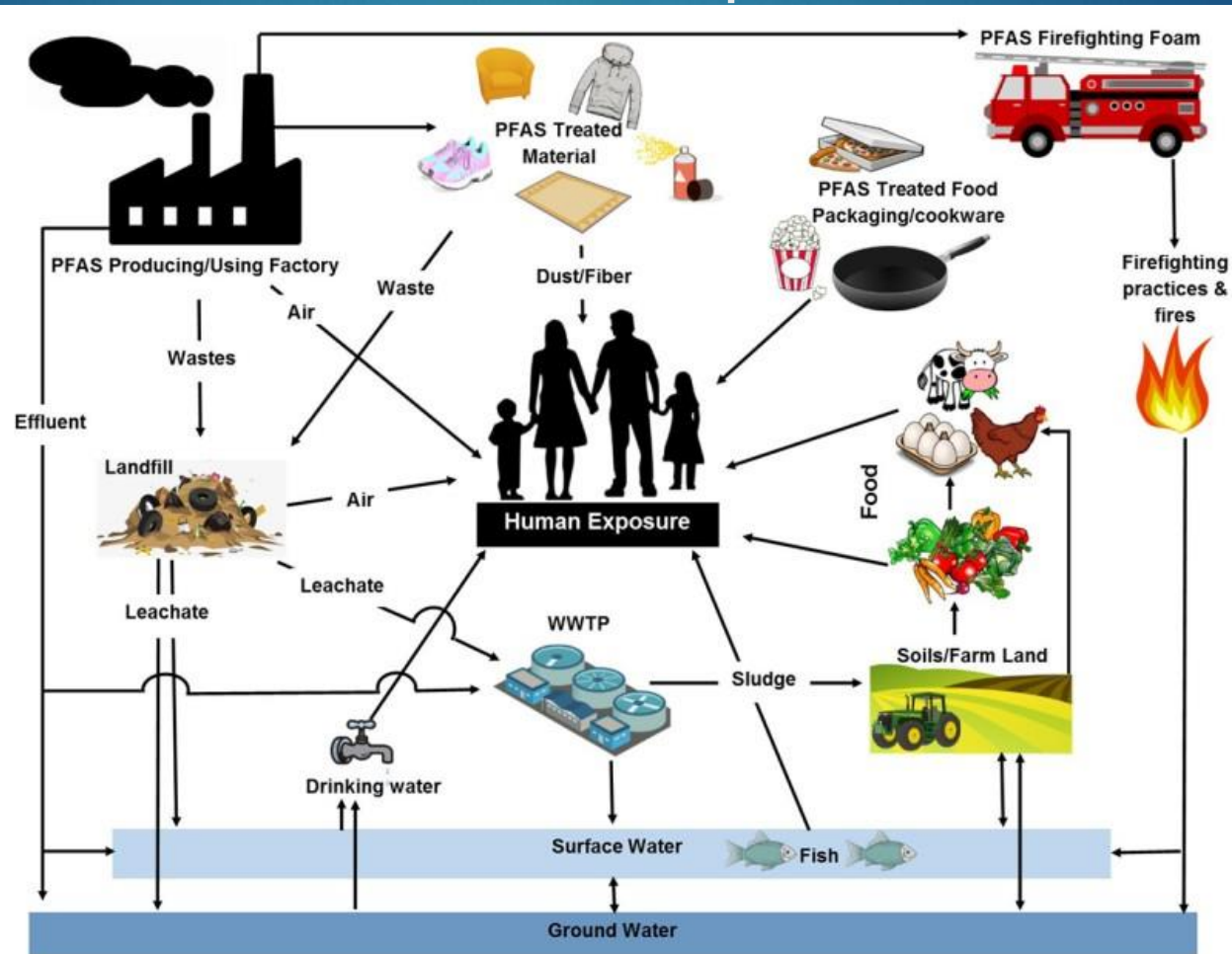


# Sources of PFAS



Source: <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/forever-chemicals-called-pfas-show-your-food-clothes-and-home>

# PFAS Pathways into the environment and human exposure



Human Exposure and sources of PFAS  
Image: DWP, adapted from Oliaei et al. 2013.

# Where did the Private Well program come from?

- ▶ Legislature provided \$8.4M requested by Baker–Polito Administration for:
  - ▶ MassDEP, with technical assistance partners UMass Amherst and UMass Lowell, testing of public water supplies throughout Massachusetts for PFAS
  - ▶ MassDEP, with technical assistance partners UMass Amherst and UMass Lowell, testing of private wells throughout Massachusetts for PFAS
  - ▶ Grants to municipal water suppliers to address PFAS in drinking water
- ▶ MassDEP established a Drinking Water Standard and a Maximum Contaminant Limit (MCL) of 20 ppt for the sum of six PFAS compounds (PFAS6) in drinking water for public water supplies (October 2, 2020)



# What is the MassDEP Private Wells PFAS Sampling Program?

- ▶ free PFAS sampling and analysis in 85 communities where 60% or more of residents are served by private wells
- ▶ Local Boards of Health have the authority to regulate private wells; MassDEP works with BOHs, town hall, and UMass for the program
- ▶ Approximately 20–40 wells to be sampled in each community
- ▶ Goal is to characterize the presence of PFAS across the Commonwealth

# MassDEP/UMass PFAS Story Map

- ▶ MassDEP/UMass has private well and public water supply “story maps”
- ▶ Includes wide range of information about the program
  - ▶ Results by Town
  - ▶ FAQs on how the program works
  - ▶ How to get your own well tested
  - ▶ Other info
- ▶ [Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances \(PFAS\) in Private Well Drinking Water Supplies FAQ | Mass.gov](#)

# Selecting sampling sites in MA Towns

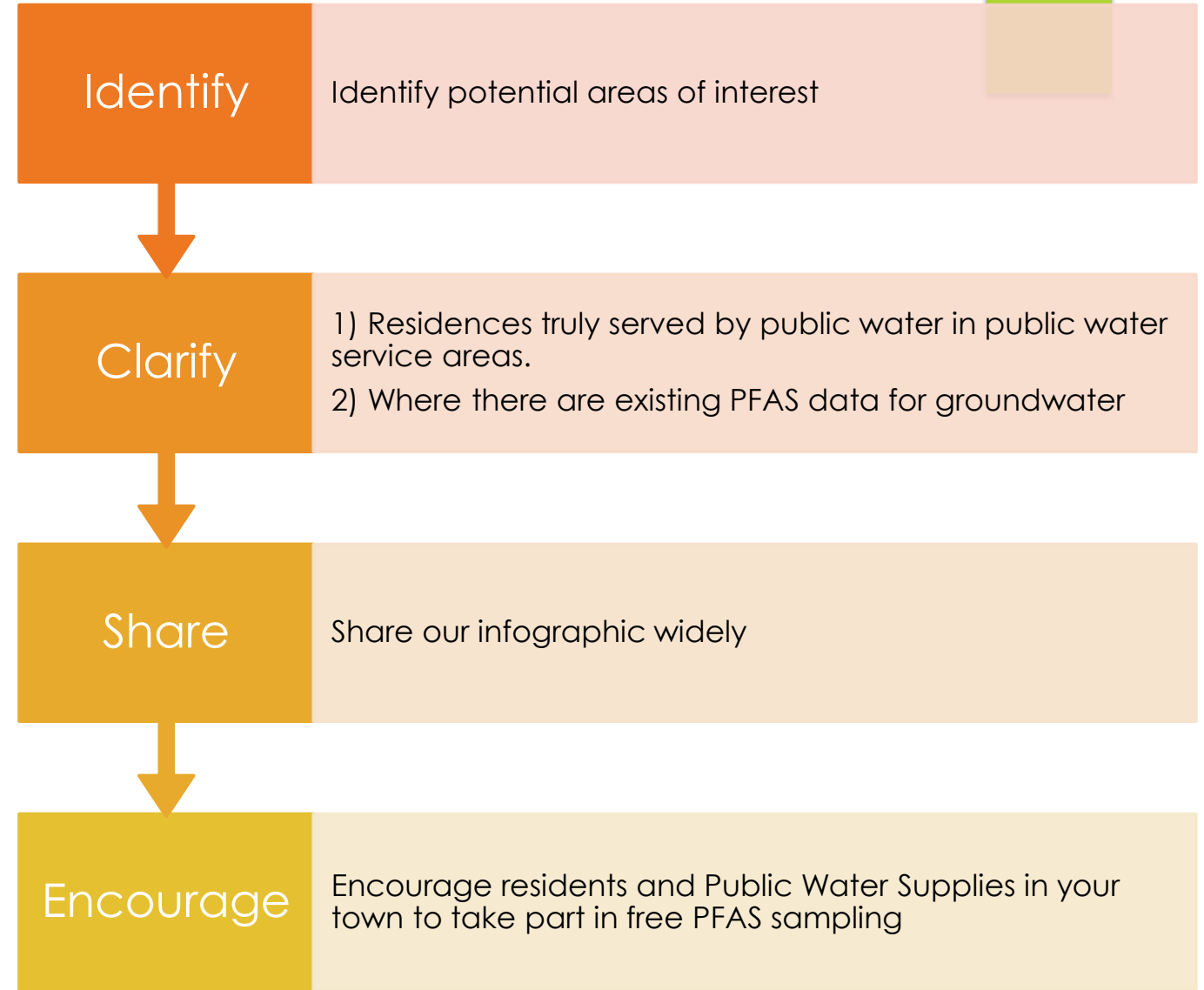
- ▶ Where there are applicants
- ▶ Residences not known to be on a public water system
- ▶ Application must be by property owner, interested renters may work with the property owner to apply
- ▶ Some sites chosen randomly for geographic distribution
- ▶ Some chosen based on proximity to potential PFAS sources
- ▶ Considered topography, hydrology

# GENERAL Potential PFAS Source Areas

- ▶ **Landfills** – current and historic landfills and dumping areas
- ▶ **Firefighting Foam usage** – Airfields, military bases, fire-fighting training areas, big fires, locations where Class B firefighting foam has been discharged (not necessarily fire stations)
- ▶ **Biosolids** – Application of sewage sludge, paper mill sludge
- ▶ **Groundwater Discharges** – Big septic systems, other permits
- ▶ **Air Releases** – Incinerators, permitted releases
- ▶ **Hazardous Waste Sites** – Known PFAS are tracked, are there unknown?
- ▶ **Areas with known PFAS in drinking water**



# What we ask Towns to do . . .



# Benefits of sampling for private well owners?



Knowing what is in  
your water



Potential health  
benefits



Free, limited time offer,  
sampling and analysis  
with state funds

# PFAS Private Well Program

- ▶ Get Town feedback on proposed private well sampling locations
- ▶ ~75 private well owners receive postcard invitations to apply on-line
- ▶ ~20–40 of applicants will be selected and instructed on how to collect samples
- ▶ UMass Technical Assistance Providers will communicate, train, and manage logistics



MassDEP

You have been selected to apply for **FREE**

# WATER

TESTING for PFAS



UMASS



## REGISTER

Please apply for a free private well water sampling kit at [dwp-pfas.madwpdep.org](http://dwp-pfas.madwpdep.org)



## SAMPLE

Receive your free and easy-to-use sampling kit. Collect water samples and return free of charge.



## GET RESULTS

Find out if your well water contains per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

Your participation will help increase understanding of the impact of PFAS chemicals in drinking water across Massachusetts. The testing is being offered by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, together with the University of Massachusetts.

# Social Media Post

- ▶ MassDEP is offering private well owners an opportunity to receive free testing for PFAS compounds in communities where 60% or more of the consumers use private wells, like TOWN. The link to apply for free sampling is <https://dwp-pfas.madwpdep.org>.
- ▶ For more information about the program, see their FAQ (<https://www.mass.gov/doc/frequently-asked-questions-about-the-massdep-private-wells-pfas-sampling-program/download>).



# **FREE** WELL WATER

## TESTING for PFAS



### REGISTER

Well owners, please apply online for your free private well drinking water sampling kit.



### SAMPLE

Receive your free and easy-to-use sampling kit. Collect water samples and return free of charge.



### GET RESULTS

Find out if your private well drinking water contains per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). PFAS have been linked to adverse health effects.



Apply for **FREE** water testing  
**TODAY**  
[dwp-pfas.madwpdep.org](https://dwp-pfas.madwpdep.org)



Apply promptly, this is a limited time offer, in select towns.  
Applications must be made online. If using cell phone, orient in landscape mode.

# What steps does an interested private well owner take?

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Resident goes online and completes form to indicate interest

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PFAS Team determine wells to be included in the sampling program from respondents

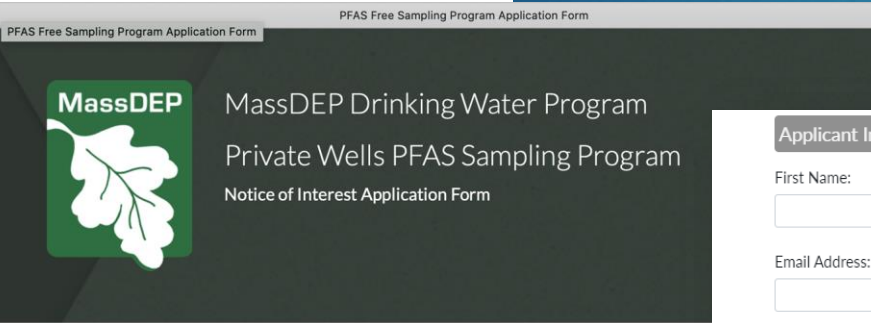
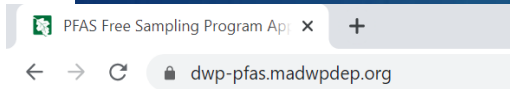
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Confirmation of program acceptance sent to Private Well Owner with Agreement Form

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Sampling kit and instructions sent to owners who send back agreement forms

# Notice of Interest Application Form



**COVID-19 Note:** To address COVID-19 concerns you will be instructed on how to collect the water samples and no one will need to visit your well for the free PFAS program.

This form is to indicate your interest in free PFAS drinking water sampling and analyses for your Massachusetts private well about the program, see the [introductory letter](#) and [FAQ](#).

### Check Eligibility

If you live in one of 84 Massachusetts towns in which 60% or more of residents are served by private wells, you are eligible.

Select the town where private well is located:

ABINGTON

If you are selected for the program, MassDEP will:

- Provide free laboratory analysis of private well water using EPA Method 537 or 537.1.
- Provide the following materials:
  - Written and video instructions for collecting samples,
  - Sampling kit including sample bottles and a cooler,
  - All necessary forms and labels,
  - Free transport of the sample bottles via laboratory courier to the laboratory for testing.
- Assign an anonymous sample ID number and will retain the sampling results in a separate anonymized system that does not include homeowner name and addresses.
- Share sample results, location, and well owner information with the local Board of Health for the municipality where the wells are located.
- Provide materials to re-sample the well a second sample to confirm results. The materials are provided at no cost to you. If you are selected for the program, you will be provided with new sampling materials.
- Provide the results of the testing to the local Board of Health for the municipality where the well is located. The results will also be copied to the MassDEP Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup statewide and local characterizing and if sources of PFAS. A result of 20 ppt or at reportable concentration under 310 CM Massachusetts Contingency Plan. For more information, see the [21E MassDEP Private Wells PFAS Sampling Program Q&A](#).

### Applicant Information

First Name:  Last Name:

Email Address:  Primary Phone Number:

Formats: 123-456-7890 (123) 456-7890 1234567890

If you would like to receive updates and notifications via text message enter your mobile phone number below (msg & data rates may apply).

Mobile Phone Number:

Formats: 123-456-7890 (123) 456-7890 1234567890

### Street Address (of the well to be sampled)

Street Address Line 1:

Street Address Line 2:

City/Town:  Zip Code:

### Mailing Name & Address (where sampling materials will be mailed)

Same as Applicant Name

Mailing Name:

### Well Information (if known)

Well Type:  Well Depth (in feet):  Installation Date:

Format: 01/01/2020

### Water Treatment Information (if known)

Is the the water from the well treated?

- Yes  
 No  
 I don't know

### Certification

Click each checkbox below to indicate you have read and agree to the term(s).

- I agree to collect the water sampling according to the instructions provided by MassDEP.
- I agree to ship the sample to the designated laboratory in the shipping container provided.
- I understand that MassDEP cannot guarantee that the name and address of the well owner and the sampling results will not become public pursuant to a request for information under the Massachusetts Public Records Law.
- I understand MassDEP's Drinking Water Program will send a copy of the results letter to the local Board of Health in the municipality where the wells are located and to the MassDEP Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup (BWSC).
- I understand that the BWSC may contact me while characterizing PFAS levels and investigate any potential sources of PFAS in the town.
- I understand that private well owners are responsible for addressing contaminants in their well water.

# How does sampling work?

- ▶ MassDEP and UMass contact confirmed well owners to verify their information and arrange for the sample to be taken
- ▶ MassDEP's lab partner sends the sampling kit (in a cooler) to the owner with instructions on how to take the sample
- ▶ The owner takes samples from their tap following the included instructions, which includes a link to a training video on YouTube

# What happens after results come in?



All results will be shared with the private well owner, local Board of Health, and the MassDEP Drinking Water Program



Additionally, if PFAS is detected above 20 ppt:

- Technical Assistance Providers advise homeowners on next steps
- Confirmatory sampling
- MassDEP will work to identify potential sources
- Results will be shared with MassDEP BWSC

**Detection of PFAS6 above 20 ppt in a private well may have legal and financial implications for its owner. Each private well owner will be notified of this in advance of participating and acknowledge this on their signup form**



# Implications – Drinking Water Program

- ▶ **What will the MassDEP Drinking Water Program do if PFAS is confirmed in well water?**
  - ▶ Local Boards of Health have the authority to regulate private wells and the owner of a private well is generally responsible for ensuring the quality of the drinking water and addressing any contaminants
  - ▶ Residents with PFAS in their private well will likely have questions for Board of Health and other Town officials
  - ▶ MassDEP and its UMass contractor can provide technical assistance on ways for the owner to reduce exposure to PFAS in drinking water, including the use of bottled water and installation of treatment systems

# Implications – Other MassDEP Programs

- ▶ Detection of PFAS6 above 20 ppt in a Private Well may have legal and financial implications for its owner. Each owner will be notified of this in advance of participating and acknowledge this on their application and agreement forms.
  - ▶ A PFAS6 result of 20 ppt or above is a reportable concentration under Massachusetts Regulation 310 CMR 40.0000, the Massachusetts Contingency Plan.
  - ▶ The MassDEP Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup (BWSC) will receive copies of all private well PFAS lab results for waste site notification and cleanup requirements.
  - ▶ MassDEP BWSC will follow-up with the well owner to ensure that private wells with detections higher than 90 ppt (i.e., Imminent Hazards under the regulations) are addressed in a timely manner.
  - ▶ The PFAS Private Wells Sampling Program 21E Q&A provides information on MassDEP BWSC possible action, depending on the level of PFAS detected in the well (< 20 ppt, from 20 to 90 ppt, or > 90 ppt).

# Town Considerations

- ▶ If a Town facility, such as a landfill or firefighter training area, is identified as a source of PFAS contamination, the Town could have obligations under the state Waste Site Cleanup Program
- ▶ Required response actions under the state Waste Site Cleanup Program may include testing additional private wells in the area and the provision of bottled water/treatment systems to the affected area
- ▶ For more specific information on the state Waste Site Cleanup Program, email [bwsc.information@mass.gov](mailto:bwsc.information@mass.gov)

# PFAS Private Well Testing Program – so far

- ▶ 62 Towns with sampling results
- ▶ 43 Towns – all results below 20 ppt
- ▶ Statewide – about 94% below the MCL
- ▶ Statewide – report out Summer 2022



# FREE



# WELL WATER

## TESTING for PFAS



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Apply promptly, this is a limited time offer, in select towns.

Applications must be made online. If using cell phone, orient in landscape mode.



## Free PFAS Testing of Private Well Drinking Water in Select Towns



Free PFAS testing of private well water is available in the following 85 towns where 60% or more residents get their drinking water from private wells.

Aquinnah	Charlton	Hampden	Mount Washington	Plympton	Sutton
Ashby	Chesterfield	Harvard	Nantucket	Princeton	Tolland
Ashfield	Chilmark	Hawley	New Ashford	Rehoboth	Truro
Becket	Clarksburg	Heath	New Braintree	Richmond	Tyngsborough
Belchertown	Colrain	Holland	New Marlborough	Rochester	Tyringham
Berkley	Conway	Hubbardston	New Salem	Rowe	Wales
Berlin	Dover	Lakeville	Newbury	Royalston	Warwick
Bolton	Dunstable	Leverett	Oakham	Sandisfield	Washington
Boxborough	Erving	Leyden	Otis	Savoy	Wellfleet
Boxford	Florida	Mendon	Pelham	Shelburne	Wendell
Brimfield	Freetown	Middlefield	Peru	Sherborn	West Tisbury
Buckland	Goshen	Millville	Petersham	Shutesbury	Westhampton
Carlisle	Granby	Monterey	Phillipston	Stow	Westport
Carver	Granville	Montgomery	Plainfield	Sutton	Windsor
Charlton					

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