

# 2023 Consumer Confidence Report

## Your Annual Drinking Water Quality Information



### Williamstown Water Department

675 Simonds Rd, Williamstown, MA 01267

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Public Water Supply ID #1341000

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This report provides a snapshot of the drinking water quality that was achieved last year. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains and how its quality compares to state and federal standards. We are committed to providing you with information because informed customers are our best allies.

#### **PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM INFORMATION**

Our water system is routinely inspected by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). MA DEP inspects our system for its technical, financial, and managerial capacity to provide safe drinking water to you. To ensure that we provide the highest quality of water available, your water system is operated by Massachusetts certified operators who oversee the routine operations of our system. Your water is constantly monitored by us and MassDEP to determine the effectiveness of existing water treatment and to determine if any additional treatment is required. During the year 2023 we repaired 7 major water main breaks along with upgrading and replacing valves throughout the system. Well #2 has been undergoing some rehab/upgrades that are long overdue. As part of the project, Well #2 has been temporarily removed from production so a thorough inspection could be completed. Upon inspection, a new pump will be required and is currently awaiting reinstallation. The well is expected to be back online in the summer of 2024. Meanwhile the rest of the project is still in the design phase. All design work and oversight will be done by Wright - Pierce Engineering Consultants.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

While we do not have regularly scheduled meetings regarding our water system, we welcome any opportunity to discuss concerns or issues. Please contact us if you would like to publicly discuss your drinking water.

#### **YOUR DRINKING WATER SOURCE**

##### *Where Does My Drinking Water Come From?*

Williamstown Water comes from three groundwater sources that are designated by MassDEP Source Name and ID Source Number as Well #2 Stetson Road Well [1341000-02G], Well #3 Green River Well [1341000-03G], Well #1A, Replacement Well [1341000-04G]. All three are ground water wells, in a confined aquifer. They are also artesian in their flow characteristics; this means they are under pressure and will come to the top of the ground without the use of a pump. The pumps are only installed to create enough force to fill the underground storage tank (2.75 million gallons), located between the end of South Street and the end of Stone Hill Rd. Two of the wells are located on Stetson Road adjacent the Cal Ripken field, and the other located off Main St. behind the Town's tennis courts. Williamstown still maintains the surface supplies of Sherman Springs Reservoir and Rattlesnake Reservoir as backups for emergency supplies. These two sources account for an approximate 10-million-gallon safety net.

##### *How are These Sources Protected?*

To protect against bacterial contamination, your water is treated with a disinfectant solution of Sodium Hypochlorite (NaOCL) Chlorine, and a Poly-orthophosphate (PO<sub>4</sub>)<sub>3</sub> as a sequestering agent for calcium, iron, and manganese. The product name for our poly-orthophosphate is AQUAMAG.

Williamstown Water Department makes every effort to provide you with safe and uncontaminated drinking water. The water quality achieved with our system is monitored by us and MassDEP to determine if any future treatment or improvements that may be required. In addition, MassDEP inspects the system approximately every 3 years to evaluate compliance with current state and federal regulations. Our last Sanitary Survey inspection was conducted by MassDEP in May 2021. All compliance measures have been satisfied, with no outstanding actions remaining.

## **SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT AND PROTECTION (SWAP) REPORT**

Significant sources of potential contamination in Williamstown's Zone II recharge are inclusive of the following but not limited to:

Non-conforming Zone I

Residential Lane Uses

Transportation Corridors

Hazardous Materials Storage and Use

Confirmed Oil or hazardous material contamination sites

Comprehensive wellhead protection planning with the City of North Adams

Agricultural Activities

Right of way owned by other Natural gas, National Grid (electric high-tension lines), HQWD (wastewater interceptor mains), and Railroad lines.

Williamstown has high susceptibility to potential sources of contamination due to the vast area of recharge for its Zone II. Sources of potential contamination are controlled through zoning regulations, and best management practices to limit the aquifer's exposure from the abovementioned threats. Through continuous monitoring of land uses public, residential, commercial, and agricultural, it is our mission to keep the public drinking water aquifer safe and potable for the general public. The SWAP report is available for public viewing at 675 Simonds Rd Williamstown at the Public Works Building or on the web at [http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dep/water/drinking/swa\\_p/wero/1341000.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dep/water/drinking/swa_p/wero/1341000.pdf)

*Residents can help protect sources by:*

- *Turn the water off when you are brushing your teeth or washing your hands.*
- *Use a bucket of suds to wash a car or bicycle. Then rinse quickly with a hose.*
- *Wash laundry or do dishes in full loads.*
- *Water the garden in the morning or evening to avoid excessive evaporation.*
- *Use bark mulch around shrubs, trees, or plantings as it retains moisture much better than just soil.*
- *Fix leaks as toilets and faucets can attribute up to as much as 3,000 gallons of waste per year.*

## **SUBSTANCES FOUND IN TAP WATER**

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. Contaminants that may be present in source water include.

**Microbial contaminants** - such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

**Inorganic contaminants** - such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial, or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, and 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 can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

**Radioactive contaminants** - which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

## COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS

### *Does Drinking Water Meet Current Health Standards?*

We are committed to providing you with the best water quality available. We are proud to report that last year your drinking water met all applicable health standards regulated by the state and federal government.

### IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

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

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

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

**90th Percentile** - Out of every 10 homes sampled, 9 were at or below this level.

**Treatment Technique (TT)** - A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

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

**Unregulated Contaminants** - Contaminants for which EPA has not established drinking water standards. The purpose is to assist EPA in determining their occurrence in drinking water and whether future regulation is warranted.

**Method of Detection Limit (MDL)** - The minimum concentration of a substance that can be measured and reported with 99% confidence the analyte concentration is greater than zero and determined from analysis of a sample in a given matrix containing the analyte.

**Turbidity** - A measure of the cloudiness of water. Turbidity is monitored because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of the filtration system.

**Massachusetts Office of Research and Standards Guidelines (ORSG)** - This is the concentration of a chemical in drinking water, at or below, which adverse health effects are unlikely to occur after chronic (lifetime) exposure.

**Level 1 Assessment** - A study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in a water system.

**Level 2 Assessment** - A very detailed study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why an E. coli MCL violation has occurred or why total coliform bacteria have been found in a water system on multiple occasions.

## WATER QUALITY TESTING RESULTS

The water quality tables show the most recent water quality testing results where levels were detected and compares those levels to standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency and Massachusetts Environmental Protection Agency.

MassDEP has reduced the monitoring requirements for Inorganic Contaminants (IOCs), Synthetic Organic Contaminants (SOCs), and Perchlorate, because the source is not at risk of contamination. The last samples were collected on 8/1/2023 for Perchlorate, 11/20/2023 for Inorganic Contaminants (IOC), 9/2021 for Synthetic Organic Contaminants, 8/1/2023 for Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC), and 7/21/2022 for PFAS and were all found to meet all applicable US EPA and MassDEP standards.

With the exception of those compounds noted on the tables below, all other compounds in the panels reported undetectable levels.

Regulated Contaminant	Date(s) Collected	Highest Result	Range Detected	MCL	MCLG	Violation (Yes/No)	Possible Source(s) of Contamination
<b>INORGANIC CONTAMINANTS</b>							
<i>Barium (ppm)</i>	<i>11/20/2023</i>	<i>0.0092 (Well #3)</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits.</i>
<b>ORGANIC CONTAMINANTS</b>							
<i>Nitrate (ppm)</i>	<i>11/20/2023</i>	<i>0.0551 (Well #3)</i> <i>0.0533 (Well #1A)</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks; sewage; erosion of natural deposits.</i>
<b>DISINFECTANTS AND DISINFECTION BY-PRODUCTS</b>							
<i>Chlorine Residual (ppm)</i>	<i>Daily</i>	<i>.58</i>	<i>.05-.58</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Byproduct of drinking water chlorination</i>

Contaminant (units)	Dates Collected	Result or Range Detected	Average Detected	SMCL	ORSG	Possible Source(s) of Contamination
<b>UNREGULATED AND SECONDARY CONTAMINANTS</b>						
<i>Manganese** (ppb)</i>	<i>11/20/2023</i>	<i>2.4-10.4</i>	<i>7.7</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>Naturally occurring, corrosion of cast iron pipes</i>
<i>Use of water containing manganese at concentrations above the secondary MCL may result in aesthetic issues including the staining of laundry and plumbing fixtures and water with an unpleasant bitter metallic taste, odor, and/or black-brown color.</i>						
<i>**Infants and children who drink water containing manganese at high concentrations may have learning and behavior problems. People with liver disease who drink water containing manganese at high concentrations may have neurological disorders.</i>						
<i>Sodium (ppm)</i>	<i>11/20/2023</i>	<i>2.45-2.47</i>	<i>2.46</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>Natural Sources, runoff from use of salt on roadways, byproduct of water treatment process.</i>

#### LEAD AND COPPER – August 9-13, 2021

Contaminant (units)	Action Level	MCLG	90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Number of Sites Sampled	Number of sites above the Action Level	Possible Sources of Contamination	Violation (Yes/No)
<i>Lead (ppb)</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>ND</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>Corrosion of household plumbing</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Copper (ppm)</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>0.274</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>Corrosion of household plumbing</i>	<i>No</i>

ppm = parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/l)

ppb = parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (ug/l)

ND = Not Detected

N/A = Not Applicable

### HEALTH NOTES

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the Department of Environmental Protection (MA DEP) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 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 (DPH) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health. All drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection

Agency Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

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 some infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines on lowering the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800)-426-4791.

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. Williamstown Water Department is responsible for providing high quality drinking water but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

Cross connections are potentially hazardous situations for public or private potable water supply and a source of potable water contamination. A cross connection is any potential or actual physical connection between potable water supply and any source through which it is possible to introduce any substance other than potable water into the water supply. Common Cross connection scenarios are a garden hose whose spout is submerged in a bucket of soapy water or connected to a spray bottle of weed killer.

Cross connections between a potable water line and a non-potable water system or equipment have long been a concern of the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). MassDEP established regulations to protect the public health of water consumers from contaminants due to back-flow events. The installation of back-flow prevention devices, such as a low-cost hose bib vacuum breaker, for all inside and outside hose connections is recommended. You can purchase this at a hardware store or plumbing supply store. This is a great way for you to help protect the water in your home as well as the drinking water system in your community. For additional information on cross connections and on the status of your water system's cross connection program, please contact the Williamstown Water Department.

**Please make sure fire hydrants are not hidden or masked by any foliage, plantings or fencing, as it is designed so that your property is adequately protected in the event of a fire!!!!**

**Copies of this report are available at the Town Garage, 675 Simonds Road. It is also available on the web [www.williamstownma.gov](http://www.williamstownma.gov)**

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For more information regarding our system you may also visit the EPA website at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/enviro/facts/sdwis/search.htm>

*This report is a compilation of best available data sources including: licensed operators' reports, water supply owner's coordination. MassDEP public records and EPA online records. The report represents an accurate account of your water quality to the best of our knowledge. Prepared by Housatonic Basin Sampling & Testing on behalf of your water supplier.*