



BARNSTABLE FIRE DISTRICT WATER DEPARTMENT

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MAJOR WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED TO PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH

PLEASE READ THIS IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE BARNSTABLE FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

Dear Valued Customer:

In response to newly developed health guidelines by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, the Water Department will need to make major improvements to ensure that the water you receive is safe to drink now and in the future.

We are asking you to support needed improvements to the water system to protect against "Containments of Emerging Concern" that are being detected in the Cape's Aquifer. Per and Polyfluoroalkyl chemicals, commonly known as PFAS, has been detected in minute amounts in the groundwater pumped from District wells.

To address the developing detections of PFAS, the Board is proposing that that District's original pumping station at Well #1 be rebuilt to ensure that we can provide adequate and safe drinking water to our customers. PFAS has not been detected in the water from Well #1. The Board is also proposing that water produced from Wells #2 and #5 be filtered to ensure water quality.

These projects will be expensive to design and construct. We will be asking the District's residents to authorize the borrowing of \$2,483,000.00 at the May Annual District Meeting. The District will be seeking grants from any available sources to provide for a portion of funds needed. The District will also be pursuing zero percent funding from the Massachusetts State Revolving Fund. Monies will be used to reconstruct the pumping station at Well #1 and to design, and construct facilities for chemical addition at Well #1. Also, additional treatment for Wells #2 & #5 will be evaluated and designed to remove emerging contaminants from the groundwater used for drinking water.

We, the Board of Water Commissioners for the Village of Barnstable, ask you to attend the May Annual District Meeting and vote to support these vital actions to protect the health of the Village—Thank You!

More PFAS information on back side.

The Water Department has discovered presence of Per and Perfluoroalkyl chemicals, commonly known as PFAS, at levels approaching the newly issued guidelines from the in the water being withdrawn from the ground in the District's wells. Most people have already been exposed to PFAS from other pathways such as consumer products and food. *Exposure to PFAS chemicals is a concern because it accumulates in the blood over time. This January the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection reduced the acceptable level of PFAS chemicals in drinking water to protect vulnerable populations, such as pregnant mothers and infants. The detected levels in the Village of Barnstable's water supply are below the current health guideline of 20 parts per trillion. Water is important because it is ingested and is therefore considered a pathway to exposure to PFAS.

What is the Water Department doing?

The Water Department is fulfilling its duty to minimize the exposure to consumers by blending water from different sources to lower PFAS levels, and, is evaluating treatment options. In the near term, the Department is rehabilitating Well #1, and returning the pumping station to active use. Well #1 has been "Non-Detect" for PFAS chemicals.

What should Barnstable Village residents do?

You do not need to do anything at this time because the levels detected are below "Health Advisory" levels. If you have a specific health concerns regarding your exposure then you should consult a health professional, such as your doctor.

The Barnstable Fire District Water Department's mission is to provide safe drinking water, and to protect public health. Therefore, the Department has been voluntarily sampling the District's water supply for "Contaminants of Emerging Concern" Per and Polyfluoroalkyl chemicals (PFAS). PFAS is a manmade chemical which has been produced since the 1940s. It is used in a wide array of consumer products because it provides resistance to water, grease or stains. *PFAS is called the "Forever Chemical" because it does not readily break down in the environment. PFAS has been used in industrial processes to make carpet clothing, fabrics, furniture, paper packaging for food, and cookware. PFAS is also used in firefighting foams which has caused detections of PFAS chemicals in several communities. PFAS is a concern in water supplies because water is ingested causing direct exposure. Allowable levels in drinking water are based upon significant lifetime consumption rates of water by the most vulnerable populations, and several safety factors.

The Barnstable Fire District Board of Water Commissioners is notifying Barnstable Village residents that decisive actions will need to be undertaken to ensure that the water you receive is safe. The Board will be asking voters at the June 10th Annual District Meeting to authorize the potential borrowing in Fiscal 2021 as follows:

1. Rehabilitation and reactivation of Well #1 located behind the Water Department Office on Phinney's Lane at an estimated cost of \$1,133,000.00 (One million one hundred thirty-three thousand dollars). Well #1, constructed in 1954, was the original source of water for the District.
2. Design and permitting of filtration plant to remove PFAs chemicals from Wells #2 located on Breeds Hill Road at an estimated cost of \$1,350,000 (One million three hundred fifty thousand dollars). Filters will be needed to remove PFAS chemicals to comply with federal and state guidelines.

Total expenditure is **\$2,483,000.00** (Two million four hundred eighty-three thousand dollars).

Where can I get more information?

- The Barnstable Water Department website: <https://www.barnstablefiredistrict.com>
- MassDEP at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>
- USEPA's Drinking Water Health Advisories can be found at: <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/drinking-water-health-advisories-pfoa-and-pfos>
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Public Health Statement for PFOS and PFOA can be found at:
- <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/index.html>
- For additional information on possible health effects, you may contact the Massachusetts Department Environmental Protection, Office of Research and Standards, at 617-556-1165. The Board thanks you for your support for these proposed improvements intended to ensure that the water you receive is a free of any potentially harmful elements.

For more information, please contact Superintendent Thomas Rooney by email at bfdwatersupt@barnstablefiredistrict.com with questions about needed improvements.