

SERVICE CONNECTION

The Maine CDC Drinking Water Program Newsletter

Working Together for Safe Drinking Water

Spring 2019 ○ Volume 27, Issue 1

CCRs: An Important Communication Tool

Terry Trott, Rule Administrator

Community water systems are required to distribute Consumer Confidence Reports (CCRs) to all customers by July 1st every year. CCRs are an important communication tool for public water systems. They give a recap of the previous year's water monitoring results, describe what the results mean, and relate the potential health effects of detected contaminants. Because it is designed to reach every customer, the CCR is a unique opportunity to connect with your drinking water consumer base. It allows for informed public health choices and increases dialogue between systems and customers.

System specific, fillable CCRs are available on the DWP website: www.medwp.com/pws/ccrGenerator.shtml. Be sure to review the data and fill in any blanks before you send it to your customers. While the fillable CCR will meet the requirements of the CCR rule, systems are encouraged to share stories of any challenges and/or accomplishments over the past year. The CCR is a fantastic opportunity to tell your customers about all the great work you've been doing.

CCR distribution is a vital component of the rule. A common method of CCR delivery is through a customer's water bill. Water systems must make a good faith effort to deliver CCRs to all consumers, including those that do not receive a water bill.

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DWP Announces New Grant Program for Educators

Sophia Scott, Source Water Protection Coordinator

Drinking water source protection is an ongoing and community-wide commitment. Educating the public about sources of drinking water is an important strategy to foster community-wide drinking water source protection actions and management practices. Providing education and outreach to Maine students is a particularly impactful method of informing the public about the importance of safe and reliable drinking water supplies. Watershed and groundwater models are useful tools for educating students about the basics of drinking water and the importance of source protection.

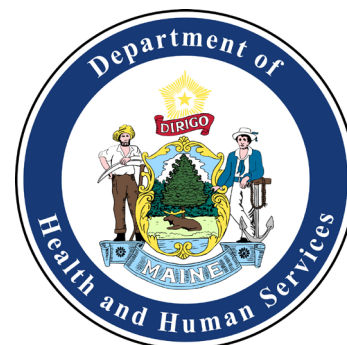
Given this, the Drinking Water Program is pleased to announce a new grant opportunity under its Source Water Protection Program. The new

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Maine CDC Drinking Water Program

DIRECTOR'S *Corner*

Michael Abbott, Director



“Emerging” seems like a good word for springtime. We look for early emerging perennials to add color to our world as the snow melts and mud season begins, we listen for the peepers as they emerge from

their winter hibernation, and we all long for the days when we can emerge from our winter coats, mittens, hats, and scarves.

Emerging contaminants, however, are not something we look forward to. The US Environmental Protection Agency states that there are thousands of substances in existence that fit into the emerging contaminants category. These are contaminants that have not been previously regulated, tested for, or treated in drinking water. In some cases, we know very little about where these substances occur, at what levels, or the associated short or long-term health effects.

The primary types of emerging contaminants found in wastewater include prescription and non-prescription pharmaceuticals, industrial chemicals, fragrances, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (from burning fossil fuels), pesticides, detergent and household chemicals, sterols, and flame retardants. Most of these contaminants are manmade.

Every five years, the EPA creates a Contaminant Candidate List, which typically contains about 100 unregulated contaminants known or anticipated to occur in public water systems. However, EPA’s Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR) stipulates that the study of emerging contaminants is limited to 30 contaminants in a

five-year period. Significant work goes into determining which of the 30 contaminants make the list. Officials look at the presence of each contaminant in US drinking water systems, the need for regulation (i.e., health risk), and the maximum contaminant level that each substance can be feasibly controlled based on the availability of treatment technologies and economic considerations.

Right now, the emerging contaminants getting a lot of attention nationwide include per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), pharmaceuticals and personal care products (PPCPs), and plastics and microplastics. In Maine, we have been assessing the presence of PFAS in drinking water systems through several sampling programs conducted in coordination with the EPA and Maine Department of Environmental Protection. (See Volume 25, Issue 4 of the Service Connection for an article the DWP’s past PFAS work.) In 2019, the Drinking Water Program plans to sample approximately 40 to 60 public water system wells and surface water sources based on proximity to potential sources of PFAS. To date, we have very few known occurrences of PFAS in Maine drinking water. However, we want to be proactive and understand the full scope of PFAS impacts and address issues where they are found. EPA has recently announced that two PFAS compounds will have Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) established. But this may take a few years. For now, we appreciate your cooperation in these sampling efforts to help us stay on top of this (one of many) emerging contaminant.

Yours for safe drinking water,

M. Abbott

Drinking Water Week 2019

Drinking Water Week has been celebrated for over 40 years. Each year, in the first week of May, public water systems, the communities they serve, and drinking water professionals join together to recognize the important role safe and secure drinking water plays in our daily lives. This year, the week-long celebration (May 5-11) will focus on the theme of Drinking Water Source Protection. Learn more about how your system can join in on the fun by visiting the American Water Works Association website, <http://bit.ly/dww2019>.



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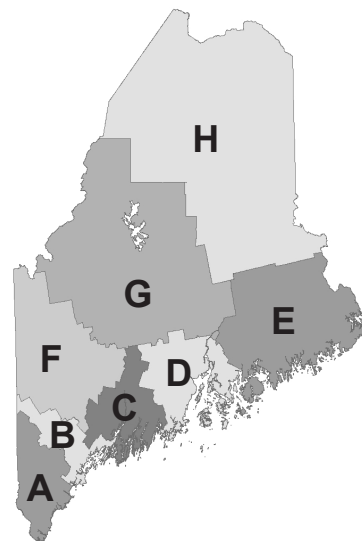
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CCRs

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When developing your CCR, consider the following:

- **Multi-lingual requirement:** Are some of your customers non-English speakers? If so, consider providing information on where they can access translations.
- **Electronic distribution:** Many systems are choosing to publish their CCR electronically. If you publish your CCR online, you must notify each consumer through a paper process, such as billing. Paper copies must also be made available. If you are considering electronic distribution, please review the requirements: <http://bit.ly/ccrelectronicdelivery>
- **Don't forget the July 1 and October 1 deadlines:** You must distribute your CCR to consumers by July 1. Fill out and submit the CCR Certification form to the DWP by October 1.
- **Create your best CCR:** Check out the EPA's Best Practices Factsheet for CCRs: <http://bit.ly/ccrbestpractices>

A note on required language: The EPA requires CCR to contain specific language about the health effects of some contaminants. This language is meant to be a word-for-word copy and cannot be modified. For more information on language requirements, visit: www.epa.gov/ccr or contact your public water system inspector.

More information about CCR requirements can be found on the DWP website, www.medwp.com/consumers/ccr.shtml or on the EPA's website, www.epa.gov/ccr. As always, your public water system inspector can answer any questions you may have. ■

Start-up Tips for Seasonal Water Systems

Sophia Scott, Source Water Protection Coordinator

Spring, a time when the world is mud-luscious and puddle-wonderful*, is also a time when seasonal systems begin thinking about starting up for the busy months ahead.

If you operate a seasonal public water system you must perform a State-approved start-up procedure and provide certification to the Drinking Water Program that you have met that requirement. Certification must be completed and submitted to the DWP before serving water to the public. You can find the approved start-up procedures on the DWP website: www.medwp.com/pws/seasonal.shtml.

Here are a few tips for starting up your seasonal system:

Inspect your well: If you do not have a sanitary sealed well cap, or if the well cap is loose, take off the well cap and check to see if there is debris inside. Use a shop vacuum to remove any unwanted material. If your well cap does not seal, replace it with a new one.

Disinfect the system: Water in your pipes and in your well stagnates over the winter. If you've drained the system, there's a good chance that bacteria have moved in. You can kill bacteria by adding bleach to your well. You must use bleach that is NSF certified.

Run your well to fill the system: Turn on faucets at the ends of the system to push chlorinated water into all the pipes and storage tanks. When you smell chlorine coming out of the taps, shut off the water and let it sit overnight.

Flush the chlorine out: After you have let your water sit overnight, open the faucets and allow the chlorinated water out of the system. Use a hose to direct the chlorinated water to places where it won't damage vegetation or come in contact with surface water. Don't flush chlorinated water into your septic system.

Flush your tanks: Be sure to drain and refill your water storage tanks to remove rusty water and ensure that the valves still work. Continue flushing until the water is no longer discolored.

Walk your pipes: If you have lines that run over the ground, take a walk around to make sure that they are not leaking. Leaking lines may result in bacteria entering the system and can increase your power costs. It can also run your well dry and damage the pump.

Wait a week before taking bacterial samples: The DWP strongly encourages that you collect an operations and maintenance total coliform bacteria sample to ensure your efforts to prepare for the season have been successful. Operations and maintenance samples do not count toward annual testing requirements.

Collect your initial compliance samples within 30 days of opening as required by the State Drinking Water Regulations. You can find information about the required water tests and testing frequency in the Annual Testing Requirements letter that was mailed to your system.

A more detailed version of these tips is available on the DWP website as a fact sheet: *Opening Your Water System for the Season*.

As always, if you have any questions regarding the compliance requirements for your system, contact your public water system inspector. ■

*at least according to e e cummings

DWP's Land Acquisition Loan Gets an Upgrade

Sophia Scott, Source Water Protection Coordinator

The Drinking Water Program believes that a water system's ownership or legal control of a watershed or wellhead protection area is the most effective means of protecting its source. The DWP's Land Acquisition Loan (LAL) program helps systems accomplish this by offering low-interest loans for the purchase or legal control of the land within drinking water source protection areas. Since 1997, the LAL has provided \$5.7 million in loans to protect 4,339 acres of drinking water source protection lands across the State. However, in the past 10 years, only three systems have taken advantage of this program. To further encourage systems to invest in protecting their source of drinking water, low-interest loans under the LAL will now be eligible for 50% principal forgiveness up to \$50,000 for the purchase of land and/or conservation easement in a drinking water source protection area. In 2019, principal forgiveness is limited to \$200,000 (about four projects per year.) All community and non-profit, non-community public water systems are eligible for LAL and applications are accepted on a rolling basis. For more information about the LAL contact Sophia Scott at sophia.scott@maine.gov or (207) 485-4058. ■



Photo: Ellsworth Water Department

The Ellsworth Water Department utilized the Land Acquisition Loan program to purchase 1196 acres in 2010.

Lead and Copper Sample Pools

Christina Trufant, Rules Specialist

The Lead Copper Rule (LCR) of 1991 required all community public water systems to create a sampling pool for lead and copper based on the priority tier ranking system. Since then, systems' sampling pools have changed for many reasons, including new home ownership, plumbing renovations, and changes in customer participation. Though the LCR's tier descriptions (see Figure 1) have not changed since 1991, the DWP has found instances where lead and copper sampling locations have changed and some systems may not be sampling at the highest risk sites. Given this, the DWP will require all community public water systems to update their sampling pool in 2019.

The number of required sampling sites depends on population served. When updating your sampling pool, be sure to have more sites than needed under standard monitoring. This way, if a site is no longer available, it will be easy to replace with another already in the sampling pool. Be advised that DWP inspectors may ask to see a copy of your sampling pool during a sanitary survey.

The DWP has recently updated the 141-A form, the Program's lead and copper reporting form. Please review the 141-A form instructions carefully to ensure all required information is properly recorded. This form helps the DWP determine if samples were collected properly and ensure sample validity. Designated operators must certify that the information is complete and accurate.

The DWP will communicate these requirements in greater detail to operators and through information on our website.

| Tier Determination | |
|--------------------|---|
| Tier 1 | Single-family homes (including mobile homes) with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • copper plumbing and lead solder built between 1982-1987 • lead plumbing • lead service line <i>Note: Apartment buildings, condos, & residential care facilities are not Tier 1 sites.</i> |
| Tier 2 | Buildings and multi-family homes (including duplexes) with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • copper plumbing and lead solder built between 1982-1987 • lead plumbing • lead service line |
| Tier 3 | All other single-family homes (including mobile homes) with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • copper plumbing and lead solder built before 1982 <i>Note: Apartment buildings, condos, and residential care facilities are not Tier 3 sites.</i> |
| Tier 4 | All other buildings that don't meet any of the above criteria. Preference must be given to residential homes/buildings over non-residential buildings. |

Figure 1. EPA's tiering schedule for lead and copper sampling pool. A sampling pool is a list of available sites for lead and copper sampling that is based on the EPA's tiering schedule. If a water system has Tier 1 sites available and the homeowner is willing to participate in sampling, then those sites must be included in the sampling pool. Tier 2 sites should be incorporated into the sampling pool only after all Tier 1 sites have been added. Systems may include Tier 3 sites once all Tier 1 and 2 sites have been exhausted. If no Tier 1-3 sites are available, other sites representative of a system's distribution system (Tier 4 sites) may be added to the sampling pool. ■

Operator Profile

A conversation between Denise Douin, Municipal System Inspector and Scott Davis, Public Works Manager and Water Operator, Lake Arrowhead Community

Denise Douin: Tell us a little about your water system.

Scott Davis: Lake Arrowhead Community (LAC) is a community water system with 1,340 connections and the population is growing with the development of new houses. We have about 50 miles of pipe in the ground and our storage consists of a 400,000 gallon above ground tank. We treat with 50% caustic soda and nothing else. Our source consists of two gravel packed wells in an aquifer with some of the best water anywhere!

How long have you been in the drinking water profession?

I have been a licensed water operator since 2004. Before that, I worked in commercial, residential, and military excavation for 20 years.

What do you like most about being a water operator?

It's hard to find a single favorite part, but one of the things I enjoy most is hearing folks say how much they love our water here. We are so very lucky to have a pristine source.

Is there anything you wish you knew when you first started in the industry?

I suspected, but never would have believed, how hard it would be to convince some people how important our water infrastructure is and how much it costs to maintain it.

Do you have any advice for new operators?

This can be a challenging business on a good day. Especially if the infrastructure you inherit needs repair or replacement right away, or if your water quality is suffering. It can be overwhelming and hard to figure out where to start and even more difficult to explain to people with no experience in the water industry. My advice is don't give up when you get pushback. Yes, it's frustrating, but do your best to educate the folks holding the purse strings about the importance of timely infrastructure improvements and realistic budgeting. The best way to do that is by having a master plan with timelines and costs developed with your guidance and input. That master plan is your road map into the future.

Why is source water protection important to you and what steps have you taken to protect your source?

A clean, adequate water source is what makes any community viable. Without it, you either have a constant, expensive struggle for the residents or no community at all. As operators and trustees, we must do everything we can to protect our source water. At LAC, we consider our water



Scott Davis, Public Works Manager and Water Operator at Lake Arrowhead Community, enjoying the Maine winter.

source to be the crown jewel of our community. If any of us fail to protect our source and it becomes compromised, we are in a world of hurt. When it comes to source water protection, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Recently, LAC purchased 27 acres of undeveloped land, which gives us total control of our wellhead protection area. Had we not purchased that land it could have been easily developed and we would have had little or no control over what happened to the land just a few hundred feet from our existing wells. Land purchases like that are deep battle planning and it can be a tough sell when money is tight - and it's always tight. Some may say, "It doesn't matter" or, "We don't need this land now" or, "It's too expensive." But, in 100 or 200 years it is going to matter, and what will it be worth then? All the world! Just look around us, water is rapidly becoming one of the most precious and sought-after resources on the planet. If we let it get away from us now, we will never get it back. Not ever. ■

A Radon Reminder

Scott Whitney, Public Water System Inspector, District E

The Drinking Water Program requires radon testing for new wells and compliance sampling to confirm that required radon removal treatment is working properly. The State of Maine has a health standard for radon in drinking water of 4,000 pCi/l. At this level, treatment or mitigation is required for community public water supplies. If radon is detected in drinking water, it is advisable to also test for radon in air. Only State licensed radon mitigation contractors can install radon air or water treatment systems.

For more information about radon contact the Radiation Control Program at (207) 287-5676 or <http://bit.ly/maineradon>. You can also contact the Drinking Water Program at (207) 287-2070. ■

New Grant

Continued from page 1...

Water Education Model Grant program is available to schools across the State. Educators can apply for either a groundwater model or watershed model, depending on the water source that supplies their school, or they can choose to apply for a drinking water and wastewater model.

This is an excellent opportunity for water systems to engage with a captive audience eager to learn about the importance of drinking water and drinking water protection. For more information about this program, please contact Sophia Scott at sophia.scott@maine.gov or (207) 485-4058. ■



Photo: Ohio EPA

Students use a groundwater model to learn about drinking water. These types of water education models (and others) are available under the new grant program.

Emergency Response Exercises Continue in 2019

William Dawson, Chief Engineer

Conducting an emergency response exercise is a practical, efficient, and cost-effective way for water systems to prepare for emergency situations that threaten their ability to provide safe, clean, and reliable drinking water. These exercises offer an opportunity for responders to work together and practice the roles and responsibilities they would play in a real-world situation. Additionally, they can help identify ways to improve emergency response plans and increase the collective ability to respond to an emergency situation.

In 2018, the Drinking Water Program helped fund six emergency response exercises, coordinated by the Maine Rural Water Association (MRWA) at the following public water systems:

- Dover-Foxcroft Water District
- Old Town and Orono-Veazie Water Districts
- Jackman Water District
- Southwest Harbor Water and Sewer District
- Newport Water District
- Salmon Falls River full-scale exercise (Berwick Water Department and Somersworth Water District)

These efforts will continue into 2019. Already, MRWA has conducted tabletop exercises with the Norway, Oxford, and Paris Water Districts and the Waterboro Water District. Exercises are planned for the Bangor Water District, Maine Water Company Rockport Division, Fort Fairfield and Caribou Water Districts, Searsport Water District, Rangeley Water District, and Yarmouth Water District. Please consider attending an exercise near you or, if you are interested in holding an exercise at your water system, contact the DWP or MRWA to begin the planning process. ■

Operator License Renewals

Jim Jacobsen, Water Operator Licensing Coordinator

Licenses with a December 31, 2018 renewal date that were not renewed now are inactive. To reactivate an inactive license, operators must submit applications with proof of training contact hours, a \$75.00 renewal fee, and a \$50.00 reinstatement fee to the Board of Licensure of Water System Operators. Training Contact Hours may be used from the prior licensing cycle for renewal of the license, but they may not be used for more than the current renewal. Licenses remain inactive for two years before becoming expired.

An operator may not be in responsible charge of a public water system with an inactive license. Individuals performing any operational duties with an inactive license are operating without a license and may be subject to civil charges if brought before the Board. Systems operating with an unlicensed operator may be found to be in out of compliance, which would be a violation issued by the Drinking Water Program against the system.

If you have questions about reactivating a license please contact Jim Jacobsen at (207)287-5695 or james.jacobsen@maine.gov.

WE VALUE OUR READERS

We are interested in your opinion. What do you like about the *Service Connection*? Where do you see room for improvement? What would you like to see more of? Are there particular topics that you'd like to learn more about or topics that we haven't covered? Get in touch with Sophia Scott (sophia.scott@maine.gov or 207-485-4058) to share your ideas.

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Sophia Scott, Editor

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The Maine CDC Drinking Water Program Newsletter

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