

SERVICE CONNECTION

The Maine CDC Drinking Water Program Newsletter

Working Together for Safe Drinking Water

Summer 2019 ○ Volume 27, Issue 2

PFAS: 2019 DWP Sampling and Task Force Update

Holly Ireland, Rule Specialist

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, commonly referred to as PFAS, have been in the spotlight and are making headlines across the country. PFAS are a class of chemical compounds that have been manufactured since the 1950s and are found in everyday consumer products, from sticky notes to shampoo, and from carpets to food packaging. PFAS are concerning because of potentially harmful impacts on human health. In 2016, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) lowered the health advisory limit for two PFAS compounds: PFOA (perfluorooctanic acid) and PFOS (perfluorooctane sulfonic acid) to 70 parts per trillion (combined) in drinking water.

To understand the impacts of PFAS on drinking water systems across the country, the EPA included six PFAS compounds in the Third Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 3.) Under UCMR 3, water systems serving a population greater than 10,000 (and a selection of smaller systems) were required to monitor for PFAS compounds from 2013-2015. In Maine, 17 systems tested for PFAS under UCMR 3 and two water systems had detectable levels of the compounds. The Sanford Water District had a detection in an inactive well near an airport and the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District (KKWWD) detected PFAS below the health advisory level in an active well installed in 2009. PFAS removal treatment was voluntarily installed on KKWWD's well and the Sanford well remains inactive.

In 2017, the Drinking Water Program (DWP) conducted additional testing for PFAS at 17 public water systems based on their proximity to potential sources of PFAS contamination as identified by EPA Region 1. These sources included airports, fire training areas, and industrial coating

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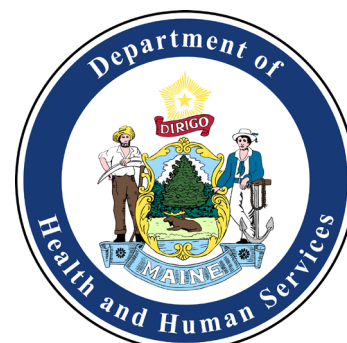


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The Service Connection is Going Digital!

This will be the last hard-copy issue of the *Service Connection* newsletter. Starting in the fall, our newsletter will be headed to your inbox (and not to your P.O. box.) The *Service Connection* will continue to be a source of quality information and ideas, and a resource to keep and reference. You can count on it for interesting articles and important reminders. Sign up for the digital version on our website: www.medwp.com/pws/serviceConnection.shtml



DIRECTOR'S *Corner*

Michael Abbott, Director



I am happy to report that the Drinking Water Program is close to being fully staffed! In this Service Connection issue, you will find introductions to new highly qualified DWP employees, including our Hydrogeologist (Susan

Breau), Public Water System Inspection Team Supervisor (Abe Habib), District D Public Water System Inspector (Michelle Coad), and Laboratory Certification Officer (Diana McKenzie). We are so happy to have these folks join our program!

This summer is busy for everyone in the drinking water world. Summer brings a higher draw upon many of our water systems, especially in areas where the summer population swells to much higher numbers than during the rest of the year. To all public water system operators: I want you to know that your excellent work, dedication and commitment to providing safe drinking water is greatly appreciated. You often come into work early, stay late, even working through the night to fix a problem. It takes continuous work and coordination to keep water systems running smoothly and safely and you are on the front lines leading that effort.

In this issue of Service Connection, you will find articles about Maine's project to address potential contamination of drinking water sources by per- and polyfluoroalkyl

substances (PFAS), reducing exposure to lead in drinking water at schools and day care facilities through the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act and some new security and emergency response plan requirements under the America's Water Infrastructure Act. Add that to concerns related to harmful algal blooms and Legionella bacteria that tend to be exacerbated by warm weather and we have been enjoying a busy summer!

One more thing: our next Service Connection will look a lot different as we will transition to an all-digital format. The new Service Connection, starting this fall, will continue to provide technical and regulatory updates from the Drinking Water Program along with interesting articles about emerging contaminants, new treatment techniques, operator licensing information and profiles on public water system operators like Greg Pargellis, Chief Operator at Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District who is featured in this issue. We hope you will like the new look and format of the Service Connection. I would encourage you to contact us with any comments and suggestions you may have to make it better.

Have a great summer!

Yours for safe drinking water,

M. Abbott

Are You Up To Code? A Reminder of the Professional Code of Ethics

Jim Jacobsen, Water Operator Licensing Coordinator

In 2008, the Maine Board of Licensure of Water System Operators adopted a code of professional ethics to establish and maintain a high standard of integrity, skills, and practice in the profession of water system operations and to safeguard the life, health, property, and welfare of the public.

The Code of Ethics includes provisions, which stipulate that the primary obligation of water system operators is to protect the safety, health, and welfare of the public; accept and perform direct supervision of water operation assignments only in the specific technical and level of

operations where qualified by education and experience; and not knowingly associate with, or permit the use of their name or employer's name by any person or company which the operator knows, or has reason to believe, is engaging in professional practices of fraudulent or dishonest nature. The entire Code of Ethics is available on the Board's website: <http://bit.ly/operatorcodeofethics>. ■

Water Operator News

In January, the Holden exam site closed without notice. A search for a replacement site is ongoing. As of this writing, no replacement site has been identified. A potential site in Ellsworth is being explored. In the meantime, the exam sites in Presque Isle, Auburn, Farmington, and Portland are operating.

Maine CDC Drinking Water Program Staff Directory

Drinking Water Program Director – Michael Abbott, PE, CG 287-5684 michael.abbott@maine.gov

Assistant Program Director – David Braley 441-5324 david.braley@maine.gov

Public Water System Inspection

Ebrahim Habib – Team Supervisor 287-8403 ebrahim.habib@maine.gov

District A: Kate Tufts 215-0624 kate.tufts@maine.gov

District B: Jeremiah 'Jed' Haws 441-6458 jeremiah.haws@maine.gov

District C: Jason Pushard 441-0381 jason.pushard@maine.gov

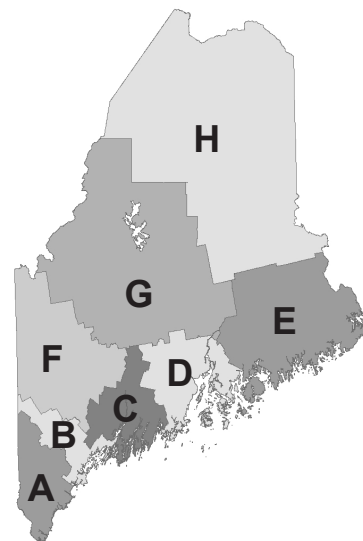
District D: Michelle Coad 215-6738 michelle.coad@maine.gov

District E: Scott Whitney 592-0578 scott.whitney@maine.gov

District F: Darren Brann 441-6573 darren.brann@maine.gov

District G: Mark Tucker 592-1661 mark.tucker@maine.gov

District H: Robert Jandreau 441-0443 robert.jandreau@maine.gov



Data Management and Program Support

Robin Frost – Team Supervisor 287-8411 robin.frost@maine.gov

Peter Bernard – Assistant Environmental Analyst 287-6471 peter.bernard@maine.gov

Martha Nadeau – Assistant Environmental Analyst 287-5683 martha.nadeau@maine.gov

Ellen Daly – Assistant Environmental Analyst 287-4484 ellen.daly@maine.gov

Fran Simard – Office Associate 287-8074 fran.simard@maine.gov

Amilyn Stillings – Information Coordinator 287-6472 amilyn.stillings@maine.gov

David Welch – Environmental Analyst 287-3056 david.welch@maine.gov

Jim Willis – Office Associate 287-5694 james.willis@maine.gov

Tina Lemieux – Water Operators/Well Drillers Board Clerk 287-5699 tina.lemieux@maine.gov

Laboratory Certification

Jennifer Jamison – Lab Certification Officer 287-1929 jennifer.jamison@maine.gov

Christine Blais – Assistant Lab Certification Officer 287-3220 christine.blais@maine.gov

Diana McKenzie - Marijuana Testing Facility Certification Officer 287-4758 diana.m.mckenzie@maine.gov

Rule Administration

Rule Administrator (*vacant position*)

Maia Ferris – Rule Specialist 287-3962 maia.ferris@maine.gov

Holly Ireland – Rule Specialist 287-1979 holly.hockertlotz@maine.gov

Christina Trufant – Environmental Analyst 287-4458 christina.trufant@maine.gov

Engineering and Water Resources

William Dawson – Team Supervisor 287-6196 william.dawson@maine.gov

Engineering

Nate Saunders – Senior Environmental Engineer 287-5685 nathan.saunders@maine.gov

Denise Douin - Municipal Systems Inspector 592-2165 denise.douin@maine.gov

Racheal French – Municipal Systems Inspector 441-5328 racheal.french@maine.gov

Larry Girvan – DWSRF Project Manager 592-7386 larry.girvan@maine.gov

James Jacobsen – Project Manager 287-5695 james.jacobsen@maine.gov

McKenzie Parker – DWSRF Project Manager 557-2255 mckenzie.parker@maine.gov

Subsurface Wastewater

David Braley – Senior Geologist 441-5324 david.braley@maine.gov

Brent Lawson – State Site Evaluator 592-7376 brent.lawson@maine.gov

Haig Brochu – Private Well Coordinator 592-3190 haig.brochu@maine.gov

Sourcewater Protection

Susan Breau – Hydrogeologist 592-6981 susan.breau@maine.gov

Sara Flanagan – Capacity Development and Security Coordinator 287-5678 sara.m.flanagan@maine.gov

Sophia Scott – Source Water Protection Coordinator 485-4058 sophia.scott@maine.gov

PFAS

Continued from page 1...

facilities. Of the public water systems tested, only one had a detection of PFAS that exceeded the health advisory. Residents of Houlton Mobile Home Park were provided bottled water for drinking and cooking, in addition to point-of-use filters. The DWP is currently working with Houlton Mobile Home Park to explore options to replace or treat the water source. Financial assistance will be provided through the 2019 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund.

Over the past several months, the DWP has worked collaboratively with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to identify additional public water systems that may be at risk of impacts from PFAS. Using DEP data, the DWP identified approximately 35 additional public water systems with known or suspected sources of PFAS near their wells or intakes. Sampling of these public water systems is scheduled to begin in July 2019. If you are one of these systems, you may have already been contacted by the DWP or one of our contracted PFAS samplers.

The continued efforts of the DWP to identify public water systems that have potentially been impacted by PFAS is only a portion of how this class of contaminants is being addressed in Maine. On March 6, 2019, Governor Mills signed an executive order establishing a task force of state agencies and other stakeholders to identify and address sources of PFAS throughout the State. On May 23, 2019, this task force



PFAS are used in many consumer products. Photo: Australian Department of Defense.

held its first meeting to discuss what is known and identify knowledge gaps, so that the State can more effectively and efficiently address this emerging contaminant. The task force will continue to meet monthly to foster collaboration and develop response strategies not just for drinking water, but also for wastewater, agriculture, and industry. To receive updates or contact the task force, please visit the website: <https://www.maine.gov/pfastaskforce/>. ■

WIIN Act Updates

Bill Dawson, Chief Engineer and Sophia Scott, Source Water Protection Coordinator

Maine is set to receive \$420,000 in grants to help disadvantaged communities meet the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA.) An additional \$406,000 will go towards establishing a program to assist local agencies in testing for lead in drinking water at schools and childcare programs. The State was granted these funds through the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act of 2016.

The \$420,000 grant funds will go to small and disadvantaged communities that have no household drinking water service or are served by a public water system that violates or exceeds any maximum contaminant level, treatment technique, or action level. Eligible projects include efforts that benefit disadvantaged communities on a per household basis, programs to provide household water quality testing

(including testing for unregulated contaminants), and activities needed for the State to respond to a contaminant. Applications for projects will be accepted on a rolling basis until June 2020. Grants require a 45% match.

In an effort to reduce children’s exposure to lead in drinking water, the \$406,000 grant awarded to the State will help increase lead testing at schools and childcare facilities. Grants will help assist local education agencies and owners of childcare facilities defray the costs of water testing. Awardees must utilize the Environmental Protection Agency’s 3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water guidance and make the testing results publicly available.

To learn more about these programs, contact Bill Dawson at william.dawson@maine.gov or 287-6196.

The 3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water guidance is available at <http://bit.ly/3ts-toolkit>. ■

Special Monitoring Evaluations

Christina Trufant, Rule Specialist

Under the Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR), the Drinking Water Program must perform a special monitoring evaluation (SME) at each sanitary survey. A SME evaluates a public water system’s status to determine if they are on an appropriate bacteria monitoring schedule. The SME may result in changes to a system’s monitoring schedule.

Moving from Quarterly to Monthly: What Triggers a Monitoring Change?

Community Systems with Population under 1,000	Seasonal Systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must have a protected source to remain on a quarterly monitoring schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To remain on quarterly monitoring you must have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An approved sample site plan with identified optimal time for monitoring; A clean compliance history for total coliform over the past 12 months; No sanitary defects, or have an approved corrective action plan; and A protected source

Please note: sampling frequency for any water system currently on quarterly monitoring for bacteria may change to monthly monitoring if the water system fails to meet the compliance requirements of the RTCR or does not have a licensed water operator.

Moving from Monthly to Quarterly: What Triggers Reduced Monitoring?

Water systems will also be evaluated to see if they meet the criteria that allow systems on monthly monitoring to move to quarterly monitoring. If your water system is on monthly monitoring and meets the following criteria, you may be eligible to monitor quarterly after an SME:

- Clean compliance history for total coliform over the last 12 months;
- Free from sanitary defects or have an approved corrective action plan;
- Protected source; and
- Approved sample site plan with identified optimal time for monitoring (for seasonal systems.)

If your system is:

- A community system serving over 1,000 people
- Supplied by surface water
- Supplied by ground water under the influence of surface water
- Utilizing ultra violet treatment
- Required to disinfect to 4-log virus inactivation (the Ground Water Rule)

You will remain on a monthly monitoring schedule for total coliform bacteria.

What is a Protected Source?

A protected source is a source with no microbiological sources of contamination within 300 feet of the intake or wellhead and has one of the following:

- An active, up-to-date source water protection plan
- Ownership of the entire source water protection area
- A legal ordinance in place to protect the source

Please feel free to call your public water system inspector if you have any questions about your responsibilities under the RTCR. You may also visit the DWP’s RTCR webpage for more information about the RTCR: www.medwp.com/pws/rtrcr.shtml. ■

The DWP Welcomes New Staff

The Drinking Water Program welcomes four new staff members: Susan Breau, Michelle Coad, Ebrahim Habib, and Diana McKenzie.

Susan Breau joins the Drinking Water Program as our Hydrogeologist and Source Water Protection team leader. Susan is a Certified Geologist and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Geology from Colby College and a Master of Science in Hydrogeology from Duke University. Her Master’s thesis involved using water wells as strain meters to help predict earthquakes in southern California. In the past, Susan has worked for consulting engineering firms and non-profit organizations. For the past 16 years she has been the Source Water Program Manager at Maine Rural Water Association.

Michelle Coad is the new Public Water System Inspector for District D. Michelle comes to the Drinking Water Program with experience in the paper and chemical industries, as well as some small business experience in stone fabrication

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Operator Profile

Get to know Greg Pargellis, Chief Operator at the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District.

Tell us a little about your water system.

Greg Pargellis: The Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District (KKWWD) has an annual population of 31,000, but this number swells in the summer months. Our daily pumpage goes from 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD) in the winter to 7 MGD in the summer. Our primary source is Branch Brook, one of the flashiest sources in Maine. We also have two main groundwater wells. The surface water plant is a conventional treatment system that is old enough that all the processes can be visually monitored and is very manual. Our distribution system runs along the coast from York to Biddeford Pool, a distance of about 23 miles, with seven water tanks and many booster stations. This allows us to fill and pump out of tanks anytime to keep the water quality fresh. We have two main interconnections with our neighboring utilities: York Water District and the Biddeford-Saco Division of Maine Water.

How long have you been in the drinking water profession?

I started third shift at the plant 26 years ago, in 1994, then quickly moved to second shift for about 11 years. I'm now Chief Operator on first shift.

What do you like most about being a water operator?

I love the treatment process. It's never a regular day, every day has those little challenges. Being able to figure what is wrong, or to fine-tune a process, keeps things exciting. Working on a customer complaint can be a fun bit of detective work to see what is wrong with someone's household plumbing.

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

One of the most important things I've found is making connections. I'm a pretty solitary guy, but I've found that reaching out to source water partners and helping them with their projects, or joining a committee in the industry, or meeting and making friends with operators at other utilities is what it's all about. Put yourself out there, you get back much more in the long run.

Do you have any advice for new operators?

Don't become complacent! Always strive for something better, always work hard till the end of the day. Research things and make them better. If you try something and it doesn't work, try something else. There is a real danger of becoming comfortable and painting yourself into a corner; don't do it, keep moving and get to it!

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

Our watershed, the Branch Brook watershed, begins in the City



Greg Pargellis is the Chief Operator at the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District.

of Sanford and runs about 13 miles as the crow flies to the plant. We work strongly with local partners along the way. We have mutual agreements with the Sanford Regional Airport and have installed pollution control devices with them; we work with the Maine Turnpike, who installed retention ponds on both sides of the Brook in case of spills. We work together with conservation groups such as The Nature Conservancy and the Wells Reserve on projects that benefit both of us. We also work with Central Maine Power on a no-spray agreement on the powerline areas near the Brook and tributaries. We have worked with EPA's source water protection folks and the Department of Environmental Protection on various issues.

The source and the beginning of everything that we do is the watershed. Anything that can happen out there affects what we have to deal with at the treatment end of things. In 2014, for the Third Unregulated Contaminant Rule (UCMR 3), we had somewhat elevated levels of PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances.) What is that stuff, and where is it coming from? With groundwater testing, we determined where it was, and quickly figured how it got there. Remember having all those connections with people in the industry? We batted around the idea of treating an otherwise pristine groundwater source and decided that it was something that we needed to do. We keep tweaking, testing, and looking at the science of carbon filtration; there are a lot of really bright people out there. With modeling and small tube filters, we narrowed down the best media. We have an expensive filtration system now that will be finding its final home, hopefully, this fall. But we aren't done yet; maybe resin in one or both filters, we aren't quite sure, but we keep working at it. We don't want to become complacent when we could do better.

Lastly, we have formed a group called the Branch Brook Coalition with several local land conservation organizations. We felt that as a group, we would have more of a voice in making important land purchases and possibly zoning changes. ■

New Staff

Continued from page 5...

and construction. Most recently she was a co-owner in a residential and commercial property inspection business, including radon and water testing. She has also owned a small equestrian business training horses and teaching riders in dressage.

Born in Illinois, Michelle grew up in Waterville. She has a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering from the University of Maine where she was a Pulp and Paper Foundation Scholarship recipient. Michelle now lives in Prospect with her husband and horses.

Ebrahim Habib rejoins the Drinking Water Program as the Public Water System Inspector Supervisor after a fifteen-year absence working in the private sector and for the U.S. Government. Abe used to work in the DWP's enforcement and rule-making section prior to his departure in 2003 to work as a contractor for the Department of Defense in Iraq. After several years in the private sector, Abe was recruited by the U.S. government to serve as a foreign service officer with the U.S. Department of State. During his tenure with the U.S. government, Abe served multiple tours in Afghanistan and around the Middle-East. Despite all the international travel, Abe's heart remained grounded in Maine where his family continued to live.

Diana McKenzie joins the Drinking Water Program as the Marijuana Testing Lab Certification Officer. Diana comes



New DWP staff members from left to right Susan Breau, Diana McKenzie, Michelle Coad, and Abe Habib.

from the Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory where she worked as a chemist analyzing water samples. She also has experience working in the Milk Quality Lab in the Maine Department of Agriculture and the Hazardous Waste Licensing Unit at the Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

A Maine native from Old Town, Diana holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from the University of Maine at Orono and a master's degree in Soil Science from the University of New Hampshire. She enjoys hiking and other outdoor activities with her family in her beautiful home state, particularly on Mount Desert Island. ■

New Requirements for Community PWS Under AWIA

Sophia Scott, Source Water Protection Coordinator

The 2018 America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) requires community water systems serving more than 3,300 people to develop or update emergency response plans and complete a risk and resilience assessment. Public water systems must submit certification to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that the risk and resilience assessment has been completed. You must also submit certification to the EPA that you updated or created your emergency response plan no later than six months after you've submitted your risk and resilience assessment certification. Submittal deadlines are determined by population served. See the table on the right for certification submittal deadlines. Please note that you do not have to submit your plans and assessments to the EPA or DWP.

Certification Submittal Deadlines		
Population Served	Risk and Resilience Assessment	Emergency Response Plan
≥100,000	March 31, 2020	September 30, 2020
50,000-99,999	December 31, 2020	June 30, 2021
3,301-49,999	June 30, 2021	December 30, 2021

After five years, you must review your risk and resilience assessment and emergency response plan and submit recertification to the EPA.

For a comprehensive fact sheet on the risk and resilience assessments and emergency response plan requirements of the AWIA, please visit the EPA's website: <http://bit.ly/AWIAfactsheet>. ■

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Sophia Scott, Editor

Drinking Water Program

Department of Health and Human Services

Maine CDC/Division of Environmental & Community Health

11 State House Station - 286 Water Street, 3rd Floor

Augusta, Maine 04333-0011

www.medwv.com

Phone: (207) 287-5678

TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

Fax: (207) 287-4172

After hours emergency: (207) 557-4214

DWP MOR submittals: dwpmor@maine.gov

DWP lab submittals: dwplabsubmit@maine.gov



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The Maine CDC Drinking Water Program Newsletter

Maine CDC/Division of Environmental & Community Health

286 Water Street, 3rd Floor

11 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333-0011

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