

# Somerset Water Department

## 2020 Drinking Water Quality Report

PWS #4273000

### THE QUALITY OF YOUR DRINKING WATER

We are pleased to present to you this year's Annual Drinking Water Quality Report. This report is designed to inform you about the water quality and services that we, the Somerset Water Department (SWD), delivered to you in 2020. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to standards set by regulatory agencies. Our goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water.

If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water utility, please contact Christopher E. Wickman, Chief Operator and Plant Manager at (508) 674-4215. Furthermore, The Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners meets every other Wednesday at 4:00 PM at 3249 County Street and you are always welcome to attend. You can also visit our website at:

[townofsomerset.org/water-department](http://townofsomerset.org/water-department)

### THE SOURCE OF YOUR DRINKING WATER

Somerset Water Department services the town of Somerset, a small area of Dighton and a few homes located in Swansea. The community is serviced by the Somerset Reservoir (# 10390S) and its treatment plant (# 10390) located in Somerset. Water to fill the reservoir comes from rainfall, the stream flow of the Labor in Vain Brook and is also pumped from a pump station on the Segreganset River in Dighton.

The town-owned land in Dighton and the Somerset Reservoir are protected by regulations in both communities from possible contamination. Testing the quality and quantity of our source water and monitoring land development around our sources ensures these supplies are safe and viable. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP) has prepared a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) Report for our water supply sources and has ranked the Dighton well as moderate and the Somerset Reservoir as high susceptibility public water supplies. The complete report is available at our web site or by calling our office.

To improve the quality of the water delivered to you and meet state and federal requirements, we filter it to remove small particles and organisms and adjust pH to reduce corrosion to household plumbing. We then disinfect the water to protect against microbial contaminants and add fluoride to promote strong teeth and prevent dental decay. In 2020 we performed over 1,400 tests to ensure the water delivered to you meets regulatory standards and is safe and pure.

The following pages summarize the regulatory standards, contaminants detected during our testing in 2020 and our programs and accomplishments in the past year. Thank you for your cooperation and support in approving and funding our efforts. Please contact us if you have any questions related to this report.

In September and December of 2019 and 2020, and SWD violated a drinking water standard involving Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) at three of our four sampling locations in part as a result of changing raw water quality and increase water age due to the closing of the Dynegy power station. SWD was issued an Administrative Consent Order (ACO #00004362) on 3/3/18 by MADEP for this violation. SWD continues to work with MADEP and our engineering consultants on corrective actions to ensure compliance with the TTHM standard.

*Portuguese Language  
Statement*

**IMPORTANTE!!**

*Este relatório contém  
informação importante  
acerca da sua própria  
parabeber.*

*Água potável se nao  
compreendeo que o  
relatório contem por favor  
contacte alguém que o  
possa ajudar a traducao.*

## SUBSTANCES THAT WE TEST FOR INCLUDE:

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

**INORGANIC** - such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban storm water runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.

**PESTICIDES & HERBICIDES** - which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff, and residential uses.

**ORGANIC CHEMICAL** - including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems.

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

## REGULATORY LIMITS

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's (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA and the MADEP prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The EPA and DEP set limits, or Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs), for over 133 contaminants. 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.

The sources of drinking water (both tap 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.

MCL's are set at very stringent levels. The Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) is set at a level where no health effects would be expected, and the MCL is set as close to that as possible, considering available technology and cost of treatment. A person would have to drink two liters of water every day, as recommended by health professionals, at the MCL level for a lifetime to have a one-in-a-million chance of having the described health effect.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised 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 infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice from their health care providers. The EPA and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Testing showed the amount of lead in our drinking water is below EPA allowed levels. 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.

Somerset 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>.

## 2020 TEST RESULTS - SOMERSET WATER DEPARTMENT

The table below lists all the drinking water contaminants that were **detected** during the 2020 calendar year from over 1,400 samples. The state requires us to monitor certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentration of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. In these cases, the most recent testing data is noted. The presence of these contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate a health risk.

Contaminants	Violation Y/N	Level Detected		Unit Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
		Highest	Range				
Chlorine	N	1.91	0.7 - 1.9	ppm	MRDLG= 4	MRDL=4	Water additive used to control microbes
Fluoride	N	1.3	0.4 - 1.3	ppm	4	4	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth
Nitrate (as Nitrogen)	N	42	42	ppb	10,000	10,000	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
Total Organic Carbon	N	3.64	2.2 - 3.6	ppm	NA	TT	Naturally present in the environment
Turbidity (Daily) :	N	0.3	0.08—0.3	NTU	NA	5	Soil runoff
Turbidity (Monthly)†:	N	NA		%	NA	≥95%	

Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of water quality. †Monthly turbidity compliance is related to a specific treatment technique (TT). Our system filters water so at least 95% of our monthly samples are below the regulatory turbidity limit.

Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)	N	Highest LRAA 38 Range: 23 - 38		ppb	NA	60	Byproduct of water chlorination
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs)*	Y	Highest LRAA 84 Range: 57 - 84		ppb	0	80	Byproduct of water chlorination

\*Some people who drink water containing TTHMs in excess of the MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidneys or central nervous systems and may have an increase risk of getting cancer.

Contaminants	Violation Y/N	90th Percentile	Number of Sites/ Number Exceeding AL	Unit	MCLG	Action Level	Likely Source of Contamination
Copper** (2017)	N	57	30/0	ppb	1,300	1,300	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits
Lead** (2017)	N	4	30/1	ppb	0	15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems, erosion of natural deposits

\*\*Reported results are the 90th percentile value (90% of all samples are less than the AL).

## Unregulated Contaminant Results

The purpose of unregulated contaminant monitoring is to assist regulatory agencies in determining their occurrence in drinking water and whether future regulation is warranted.

Contaminants	Unit	Average	Range	ORSG	Likely Source
Bromochloroacetic Acid	ppt	3130	730 - 7,500	NA	Byproduct of water chlorination
Bromodichloroacetic Acid	ppt	7810	631 - 17,300	NA	Byproduct of water chlorination
Chlorodibromoacetic Acid	ppt	1130	N/D - 2,560	NA	Byproduct of water chlorination
Manganese	ppb	59.3	N/D - 222	300	Erosion of natural deposits
Piperonyl butoxide	ppt	9	9 - 10	992,000	Deposition and run-off from pesticide application for mosquitoes
Sodium	ppm	14.0	14.0	20	Discharge from the use and improper storage of sodium-containing de-icing compounds or in water-softening agents

## NOTES, UNITS & DEFINITIONS

**Locational Running Annual Average (LRAA)** - The average of all quarterly samples for the last year at each sample location.

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

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

**ND** - Not detected    **NA** - Not applicable    **ORSG** - Drinking Water Guideline

**Action Level (AL)** - The concentration of a contaminant which if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow. A violation will occur only if the supplier fails to take corrective action.

**Parts per million (ppm)** - One part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.

**Parts per billion (ppb)** - One part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years, or a single penny in \$10,000,000.

**Parts per trillion (ppt)** - One part per trillion corresponds to one minute in 2,000,000 years, or a single penny in \$10,000,000,000.

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

## WATER CONSERVATION

Please see our website for tips on how you can conserve water: [townofsomerset.org/water-department](http://townofsomerset.org/water-department)

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

### Monitoring Data for Unregulated Contaminants for Town of Somerset

As required by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), our water system has sampled for a series of unregulated contaminants. Unregulated contaminants are those that don't yet have a drinking water standard set by the EPA. The purpose of monitoring for these contaminants is to help the EPA decide whether the contaminants should have a public health protection standard.

#### What should I do?

You do not have to do anything but as our customers you have a right to know that this data is available. You may share this information with other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, food establishments, medical facilities, and businesses).

#### For more information

For additional information on your water and the unregulated contaminants we sampled for or if you have any questions about your Consumer Confidence Report (CCR), please contact Christopher Wickman at 508-674-4215 or visit our office at 3249 County Street, Somerset, Massachusetts 02726 during normal business hours.

For information on the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Program, visit the Mass DEP website (<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/public-drinking-water-system-operations>) and navigate to Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Program.

This notice is being sent to you by the Town of Somerset      PWS ID#: 4273000      Date distributed: 3-19-2021

## SYSTEM UPGRADES AND IMPROVEMENTS

Our water system is routinely inspected by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP). MADEP 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. As part of our ongoing commitment to you, last year we upgraded some of the treatment facility process equipment, made improvements to the distribution system to reduce water age, and continue with our system-wide water meter replacement program.

## CROSS CONNECTION CONTROL

Somerset Water Department maintains a program to control cross connections in an effort to protect water quality. Please see our website for more information on this program: [townofsomerset.org/water-department](http://townofsomerset.org/water-department)

## PLEASE PASS IT ON

We ask that all our customers help us protect our water sources, which are the heart of our community, our way of life, and our children's future. Please share this report with other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly. You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.