

Consumer Confidence Report for Calendar Year 2025

Public Water System ID #1214000

# WATER QUALITY REPORT

CITY OF NORTHAMPTON  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS



**Donna LaScaleia**  
Public Works Director

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For questions or additional information, please contact the Department of Public Works at [dpwinfo@northamptonma.gov](mailto:dpwinfo@northamptonma.gov) or call 413-587-1570.



# DELIVERING SAFE, RELIABLE WATER FOR 154 YEARS

Since 1871, the Northampton's Department of Public Works has provided reliable service to the community. Today the Water Division is supported by 22 full-time employees. It serves approximately 28,000 customers and maintains an extensive system that includes more than 150 miles of water main, over 1,650 fire hydrants, and more than 5,000 valves. The system is supplied by three active reservoirs, a 6.5-million-gallon-per-day Water Treatment Plant, two active wells, and roughly 3,200 acres of watershed land.

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This annual report provides information on the quality of water delivered by the City of Northampton's Department of Public Works Water Division. The report describes where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to DEP and EPA standards. Our system is routinely inspected by DEP for its technical, financial and managerial capacity to ensure safe drinking water. The water quality of our system is monitored by the DPW's Water Division and DEP to ensure compliance with all regulatory requirements. Water quality data is also reviewed to determine if any additional treatment is required.

Please read this report carefully, and if you have any questions, call the DPW at (413) 587-1570. You may also email questions to [dpwinfo@northamptonma.gov](mailto:dpwinfo@northamptonma.gov).

For help in another language or to request a translated copy, call the Northampton DPW Water Division at 413-587-1570.

# LETTER FROM THE PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

Dear Northampton Residents and Water Customers,

We are pleased to share the City of Northampton's Consumer Confidence Report for 2025. This report provides important information about the quality of your drinking water, where it comes from, how it is treated, and how it compares to state and federal health standards.

Providing safe, reliable, and high-quality drinking water is one of the City's most essential responsibilities. The Department of Public Works Water Division operates and maintains a complex system of reservoirs, wells, treatment facilities, and more than 150 miles of distribution piping that serves our community every day. Our staff monitor water quality around the clock and work closely with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) to ensure full compliance with all regulatory requirements.

We are proud to report that Northampton's drinking water continues to meet or exceed all applicable health standards. This achievement reflects the dedication of our water professionals, careful stewardship of our watershed lands, and sustained investment in the infrastructure that supports public health, fire protection, and economic vitality throughout the City.

Looking ahead, the City is committed to thoughtful, long-term planning for our water system. Through the City's multi-year Capital Improvement Program, Northampton has identified a range of priority water system needs, including potential improvements to reservoirs, treatment facilities, transmission mains, pressure control infrastructure, and system equipment. These needs are evaluated and advanced as funding, design, and regulatory approvals allow.

We encourage you to read this report carefully. It is designed to be clear, transparent, and informative, and it is one of the ways we remain accountable to the community we serve. If you have questions about this report or about your drinking water, we invite you to contact the Department of Public Works Water Division.

Thank you for your continued trust in the City of Northampton and in the dedicated professionals who safeguard your drinking water every day.

Sincerely,

*Donna LaScaleia*

Public Works Director



Francis P. Ryan Reservoir



Avery Brook in Conway feeds the Ryan Reservoir.



Water Treatment Plant Pipe Gallery

## How Much Water Did Northampton Use in 2025?

In 2025, the City of Northampton supplied 884 million gallons of drinking water, which averages approximately 2.4 million gallons per day. The highest single-day demand during the year was 3.3 million gallons. The design capacity of the Water Treatment Plant is 6.5 million gallons per day, which provides sufficient capacity to meet peak demand.

The City of Northampton Department of Public Works (DPW) encourages water conservation. Residents are invited to visit the City's website or contact the Water Division to request a free residential water conservation kit.



Scan the QR code for details on how to request your free residential conservation kit.

<https://www.northamptonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/14488/Water-Conservation-Kits?bidId=>

## Water Restriction Policy

The DPW has adopted a water use restriction policy to comply with DEP permit requirements. The City's water supply system is regulated by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). DEP requires that water restrictions be implemented when stream-flow in the Mill River drops below a certain quantity of flow (26.3 cubic feet per second) for a 3-day period, and/or when the DEP Drought Task Force declares Drought Advisory Level 1 or higher and/or between May 1 and September 30 as a calendar trigger. The water use restriction can be lifted when the stream flow average meets or exceeds the minimum flow of 26.3 cubic feet per second for 7 consecutive days or when the advisory is lifted by the State. When a water use restriction is in place, there will be a ban on non-essential outdoor watering. The DPW will notify the public when a water use restriction is in place and will also provide specifics about the water use restriction.

## About Your Water System

Providing safe, reliable drinking water is one of the City's most essential responsibilities. Northampton's water system serves homes, businesses, schools, and public facilities, while also supporting fire protection and public health throughout the community.

This annual report provides information about the quality of Northampton's drinking water and the operation of the City's water system. The Department of Public Works Water Division is responsible for ensuring that drinking water delivered to customers is safe, reliable, and in full compliance with state and federal standards. Northampton's water system is designed and managed to meet daily demand, peak usage, and fire protection needs. The City maintains the technical, financial, and managerial capacity necessary to provide safe drinking water and to respond to changing conditions and regulatory requirements.

## Who Makes Decisions About Our Drinking Water?

The DPW Water Division operates the drinking water system under the oversight of City leadership and in coordination with the DEP. The Water Division is responsible for day-to-day operations, system maintenance, water quality monitoring, and regulatory compliance.

Daily operations are overseen by DPW Director Donna LaScaleia, Water Superintendent Keith Snape and Chief Water Treatment Plant Operator Ian Henderson. Policy and funding decisions related to the water system follow the City's public governance process. The DPW Director makes recommendations to the Mayor regarding water-related initiatives and budgets, which are then submitted to the City Council for consideration and final approval. City Council meetings provide opportunities for public comment. Meeting schedules, agendas, and materials are available through the City Clerk's Office at 210 Main Street in Northampton. To confirm meeting dates contact the City Clerk's Office.



Scan the QR code to access information about the dates, times, and locations of upcoming City Council meetings.

<https://www.northamptonma.gov/2570/City-Council>

## Come From?

In 2025, approximately 99.5% of Northampton's drinking water was supplied by three surface water reservoirs: the Francis P. Ryan Reservoir, the West Whately Reservoir, located in West Whately, and the Mountain Street Reservoir (01s) located in Williamsburg, Whately and Hatfield. The remaining 0.5% came from our two groundwater wells in Florence (01G and 02G).

Surface water from the City's reservoirs is treated at the Water Treatment Plant before being delivered to customers. In 2003, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) completed a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) report for Northampton's water sources. The SWAP Report assessed the potential for contamination of our water supplies. Northampton was ranked as having a moderate to low risk to our water supplies. The report reviewed both watershed lands and aquifer protection zones. It identified the largest threats to our water supply as residential fuel storage and some commercial uses.



To download a copy of the Surface Water Assessment Program (SWAP) Report scan the QR code.

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/western-region-source-water-assessment-protection-swap-program-reports/download>

## How We Treat Your Water

Water drawn from Northampton's reservoirs are treated before it reaches your home to ensure that it is safe, clear, and meets all state and federal drinking water standards.

For surface water from the City's reservoirs, treatment begins at the Water Treatment Plant located on Mountain Street in Haydenville. When raw water from the reservoirs enters the Treatment Plant, a

flocculant (aluminum sulfate) is added. Flocculant is a chemical that binds together small particles that are found in water to facilitate their removal. The water then goes through a clarifier where approximately 60% of the organic particles are removed. It is then filtered by granular activated carbon, which removes the remaining particles. Once filtered, sodium hypochlorite, a disinfectant, is added prior to it entering a 4 million gallon storage tank. Disinfection is a critical public health step that inactivates bacteria, viruses, and other microorganisms that could cause illness. This process is carefully controlled so that it is effective while remaining within regulatory limits. As the water leaves the 4 million gallon storage tank, sodium carbonate is added for pH adjustment and corrosion control.

The City also applies corrosion control treatment. At the Corrosion Control Facility in Leeds, zinc orthophosphate, which is a corrosion inhibitor, is added to the water. It forms a protective coating inside the water distribution pipes. Testing conducted throughout the water system in 2024 showed that this treatment is effective at reducing lead and copper concentrations in drinking water.

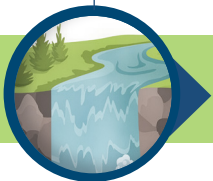
All of the chemicals used by the DPW are approved by one of the following organizations: National Sanitation Foundation or Underwriters Laboratory (UL), both accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). These chemicals also have to meet performance standards established by the American Water Works Association (AWWA).

Throughout this process, water quality is closely monitored. Samples are collected at the treatment plant and throughout the distribution system and analyzed in accordance with state and federal requirements. Results are reviewed by trained operators and by the MassDEP.

### 1. WATER SOURCE

#### RESERVOIRS & WELLS

Water is collected from surface reservoirs.



### 3. FILTRATION

#### GRANULAR ACTIVATED CARBON (GAC)

Water flows through filters to remove remaining particles and improve clarity.



### 5. CORROSION CONTROL

#### PIPE PROTECTION

Water chemistry is adjusted to protect pipes and prevent corrosion.



### 2. PARTICLE REMOVAL

#### COAGULATION & FLOCCULATION

Particles clump together so they can be removed from the water.



### 4. DISINFECTION

#### MAKING SURE YOUR WATER IS CLEAN

A disinfectant, like chlorine, is added to kill harmful bacteria and viruses.

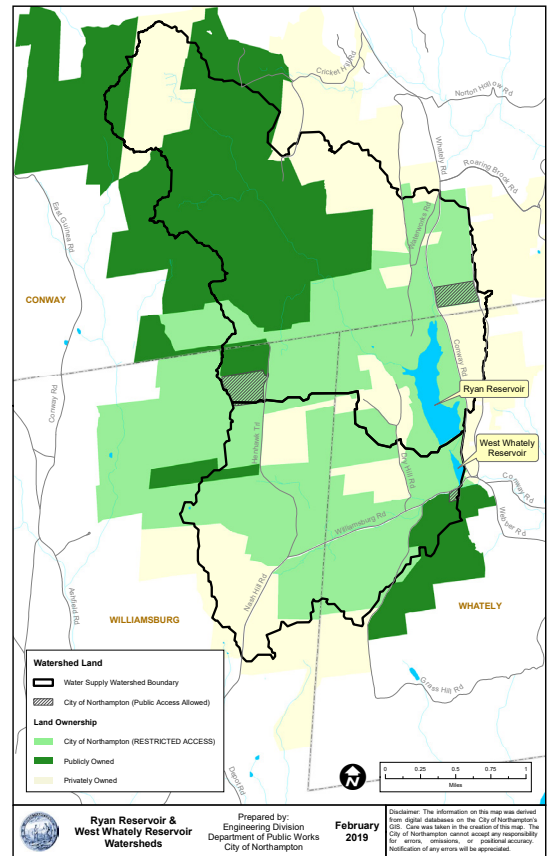
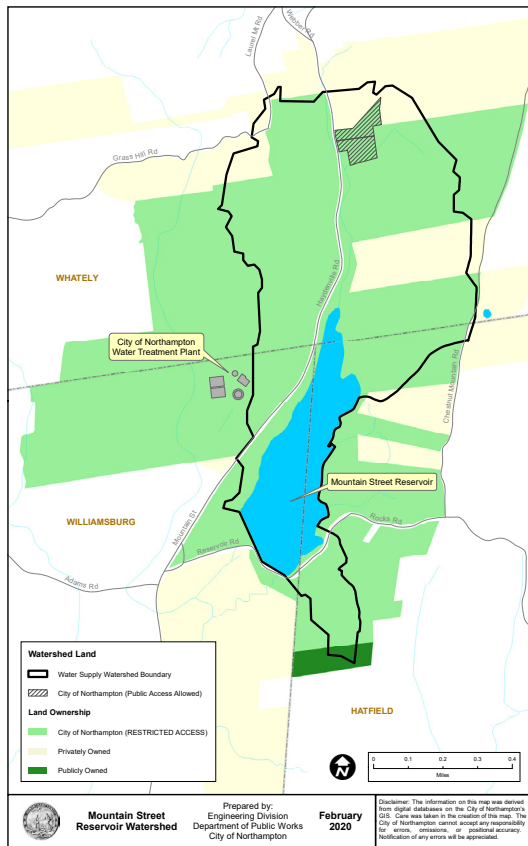


### 6. YOUR HOME

#### DELIVERED TO YOU

Clean, safe drinking water is delivered to homes and businesses.





## Protecting Our Water Sources (Watershed Protection)

Land use in and around the reservoirs plays a critical role in both water quality and long-term water supply. Forestland, the most protective land use for drinking water, naturally filters rainfall, reduces runoff, and slowly releases clean water into the reservoirs. This process helps ensure a steady supply of high-quality drinking water.

Northampton’s watershed protection strategy focuses on maintaining healthy forests on City-owned land and, when possible, acquiring additional property near the reservoirs to prevent incompatible land uses from affecting water quality. In total, the Department of Public Works owns approximately 3,200 acres associated with the drinking water reservoirs. This level of ownership provides the City with a strong foundation for protecting its water supply.

To further safeguard these areas, the City limits public access to watershed lands and routinely monitors them for unwanted or illegal activity. Forests in both the Mountain Street and Ryan–West Whately Reservoir watersheds are actively managed in accordance with a Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)–approved Forest Stewardship Plan.



To learn more about watershed protection efforts contact the Water Division or scan the QR code to visit the City's website.

<https://www.northamptonma.gov/1793/Protection-Management>

## Important Information About Your Drinking 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.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) 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 emailing the EPA at [safewater@epa.gov](mailto:safewater@epa.gov) or the **EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791)**.

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 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 by emailing the EPA at [safewater@epa.gov](mailto:safewater@epa.gov).

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. The City of Northampton Water Division 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 and wish to have it tested see link for certified labs.



If you are concerned about potential lead in your water, scan the QR code for a list of certified laboratories that can perform testing.

<https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/DEP/Labcert/Labcert.aspx>



## Water Quality Results

The DPW is committed to supplying water that complies with DEP and EPA standards. All data shown was collected during calendar year 2025 unless otherwise noted in the table. We are proud to report that last year your drinking water met all applicable health standards regulated by DEP and EPA. The state allows us to monitor for some contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently. The water quality information presented in the tables is from the most recent round of testing done in accordance with the regulations. All results shown were from samples collected during Calendar Year 2025 unless otherwise noted. Only detected contaminants are shown.

2025 WATER QUALITY TESTING INFORMATION							
Regulated Contaminant	Dates Collected	Highest Result or Highest Running Average Detected	Range Detected	MCL or MRL	MCLG MRDLG	Violation? Y/N	Possible Sources of Contamination
Nitrate (ppm)	10/29/25	2.08	ND-2.08	10	10	NO	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits.
Barium (ppm)	11/1/23-10/29/25	0.278	ND-0.278	2	2	NO	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits.
PFAS 6 (ppt)	4/9/25	2.13	N/A	20	N/A	NO	<p>Discharge &amp; emissions from industrial &amp; manufacturing sources associated with the production or use of these PFAS, including production of moisture &amp; oil resistant coatings on fabrics and other materials. Additional sources include the use and disposal of products containing these PFAS, such as firefighting foams.</p> <p><b>Health Effects</b> Some people who drink water containing these PFAS in excess of the MCL may experience certain adverse effects. These could include effects on the liver, blood, immune system, thyroid, and fetal development. These PFAS may also elevate the risk of certain cancers.</p>
Perchlorate (ppb)	7/23/25	0.38	0.22-0.38	2	N/A	NO	<p>Rocket propellants, fireworks, munitions, flares, blasting agents</p> <p><b>Health Effects</b> Perchlorate interferes with the normal function of the thyroid gland and thus has the potential to affect growth and development, causing brain damage and other adverse effects, particularly in fetuses and infants. Pregnant women, the fetus, infants, children up to the age of 12, and people with a hypothyroid condition are particularly susceptible to perchlorate toxicity.</p>
RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINATES							
Contaminant	Dates Collected	Highest Result	Range Detected	MCL	MCLG	Violation	Possible Source
Gross Alpha Activity (pCi/L)	7/10/24	0.63	ND-0.63	15	0	NO	Erosion of natural deposits
Radium 226 & 228 (pCi/L) (combined values)	7/10/24	1.13 <i>Ra 226 (0.25 pCi/L)</i> <i>Ra 228 (0.88 pCi/L)</i>	ND-1.13	5	0	NO	

DISINFECTION BY-PRODUCTS								
Regulated Contaminant	Dates Collected	Highest Result or Highest LRAA (Locational Running Annual Average)	Range Detected	MCL	MCLG	ORSG or MRDLG	Violation? Y/N	Possible Sources of Contamination
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) (ppb)	Quarterly	16	6.5-20.9	80	N/A	-----	NO	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5s)	Quarterly	11	4.2-16.8	60	N/A	-----	NO	
DISINFECTANTS								
Disinfectant	Date	Highest Quarterly Annual Average	Range Detected	MRDL	MRDLG	Violation? Y/N	Major source in drinking water	
Residual Free Chlorine (ppm)	Daily	0.92	1.10 – 1.52	4.0	4.0	NO	Additive used to control microbes	
TREATMENT TECHNIQUE								
Turbidity (NTU)	Date	Treatment Technique	Lowest Monthly %	Highest Detected Daily Value	MCLG	Violation? Y/N	Possible Source of Contamination	
Monthly Turbidity (95%) NTU	Monthly	At least 95% of samples per month below 0.3	100%	N/A	N/A	NO	Soil Runoff	
Max Day Turbidity NTU	Daily	0.3 NTU	N/A	0.147	N/A	NO		
Monthly turbidity compliance is related to a specific treatment technique (TT). Our system filters the water so at least 95% of our samples each month must be below the turbidity limits specified in the regulations.								
SECONDARY AND UNREGULATED CONTAMINANTS								
Contaminants	Date Collected	Highest Result	Range Detected	SMCL or ORSG	MCL	Violation	Possible Source of Contamination	
Bromodichloromethane (ppb)	7/23/25	1.44	ND-1.44	None	None	NO	Trihalomethane; byproduct of drinking water chlorination	
Chloroform (ppb)	7/23/25	3.91	ND-3.91	ORSG= 70	None	NO		
Manganese (ppb)	4/9/25	5.57	N/A	SMCL=50/ ORSG=300	None	NO	Erosion of natural deposits	
Perfluorobutane-sulfonic Acid (PFBS) (ppt)	4/9/25	2.33	N/A	N/A	None	NO	Manmade chemical; used as a replacement for perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS); used in the manufacturing of paints, cleaning agents, & water & stain repellent products & coatings, including carpeting, carpet cleaners, floor wax & food packaging.	
Sodium (ppm)	10/29/25	9.22	N/A	ORSG=20	None	NO	Natural sources; runoff from use as salt on roadways; by-product of treatment process	

The numbers in the “Highest Result/RAA/LRAA” column represent the value on which compliance is based and may not match the highest single detected value shown in the range. Less-than-annual monitoring: The state allows us to monitor for some contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently. Some of our data, though representative, are from prior years and are identified by sample date.

## Violations

Northampton DPW had no violations of Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs), Maximum Residual Disinfectant Levels (MRDLs), Treatment Techniques (TTs), monitoring and reporting, or other drinking water regulations during Calendar Year 2025. If a violation occurs, we will notify customers and include required health effects language and corrective steps.

## Lead and Copper in Drinking Water

Lead can cause serious health effects in people of all ages, especially pregnant people, infants, and young children. In drinking water, lead typically comes from service line materials and home plumbing. While Northampton DPW provides high-quality water and removes lead service lines, it cannot control the plumbing materials inside individual homes. Because lead levels can vary, exposure is possible even if past tap samples showed no lead. You can help protect your household by identifying and replacing lead plumbing materials and taking steps to reduce risk. Using a filter certified by an ANSI-accredited organization to reduce lead is effective, be sure to follow the manufacturer’s instructions. Always use cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula, as boiling does not remove lead. Before using tap water, flush pipes for several minutes by running the tap or using household water (showers, laundry, or dishwashing); homes with lead or galvanized service lines may need longer flushing.

Lead exposure can lead to serious health effects, including reduced IQ and attention span in children, learning or behavior problems, and increased risks during pregnancy. Adults may experience increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, and kidney or nervous system issues. Copper, while an essential nutrient, can also cause health effects when present above the action level. Short-term exposure may cause gastrointestinal distress, and long-term exposure can lead to liver or kidney damage. People with Wilson’s Disease should consult their doctor.



If you’re concerned about lead and want your water tested, contact Northampton DPW at 413-587-1570. More information is available on the EPA’s website via the QR code.

<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water>

Northampton treats its drinking water to comply with state and federal Lead and Copper regulations. This treatment stabilizes the water’s pH and creates a protective coating on the inside of pipes, which helps prevent lead and copper from dissolving into the water as it travels through the distribution system and household plumbing.

After many consecutive years of successful testing, the Department of Public Works demonstrated consistent compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule. As a result, in 2006 the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection reduced Northampton’s monitoring requirements to once every three years. The most recent testing, completed in 2024 (see the table below for data from the Lead and Copper Testing in 2024) confirmed that Northampton remains in full compliance. Based on these results, the next required round of lead and copper sampling will occur in 2027.

On November 30th, 2023, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposed Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) aimed at further reducing lead in drinking water nationwide. These proposed changes include identifying all lead service lines, achieving 100 percent lead pipe replacement within ten years, improving tap sampling requirements, lowering action levels, and strengthening overall protections to reduce exposure.

In response, the Northampton Water Division has begun preparing for these new requirements by developing a Lead Service Line Inventory that documents the material of water service lines throughout the system. This work positions the City to meet future regulatory obligations and continue protecting public health.

To request a copy of the Lead Service Line Inventory, email [dpwinfo@northamptonma.gov](mailto:dpwinfo@northamptonma.gov).

## Lead and Copper in Schools

In 2004, 2016, 2018, the Northampton DPW and the Northampton School Department conducted extensive testing of all public schools for lead and copper. All water fixtures were tested including bubblers, sinks and faucets. Any fixtures that were over the EPA limit were either replaced or removed from service.

LEAD AND COPPER TESTING 2024									
Substance	Dates Collected	90th Percentile	Action Level (AL)	MCLG	# of Sites Sampled	# of Sites Above Action Level	Range	Violation	Possible Sources of Contamination
Lead (ppb)	July-Sept. 2024	2.6	15	0	30	1	ND-35.3	NO	Corrosion of Household Plumbing
Copper (ppm)	July-Sept. 2024	0.151	1.3	1.3	30	0	ND-0.180	NO	

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

*90th Percentile – Out of every 10 homes tested for lead and copper levels, 9 were at or below this level. We collected 30 samples, therefore the 90th percentile would be the 27th highest sample (30 x 0.9 =27).*

## Cross-Connection Control and Backflow Prevention

A cross-connection occurs when contaminated or non-potable water flows backward into a drinking water line. This can create a serious health risk when a water line is connected to equipment that contains harmful liquids, such as a boiler, air-conditioning system, or fire sprinkler system, and the pressure in the water system drops. Events such as a fire, a water main break, or heavy water use can cause this drop in pressure. When that happens, liquids from connected equipment can be drawn back into the drinking water supply.

Cross-connection and backflow risks are not limited to commercial or industrial facilities. A simple garden hose at your home can create a dangerous situation. For example, if a hose is used to spray fertilizers, pesticides, or weed killers and water pressure drops, the liquid being sprayed can be pulled back into your home's plumbing and the public water system.

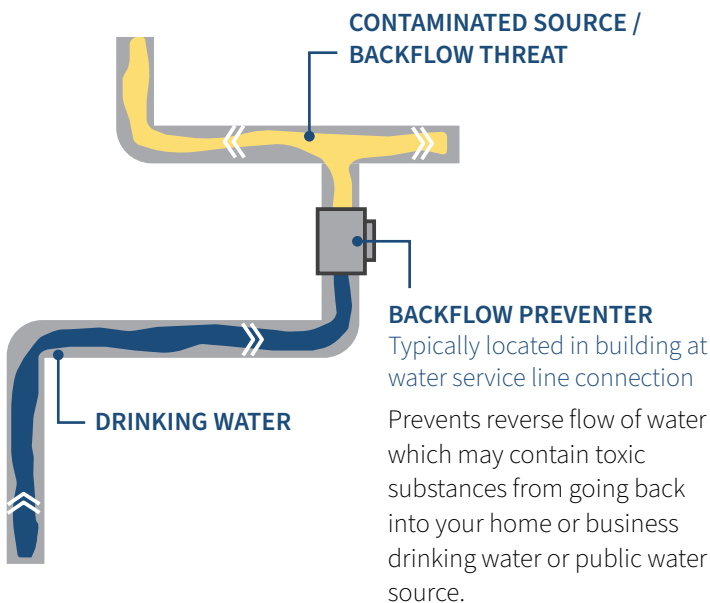
To help prevent cross-connections:

- Never submerge hoses in buckets, pools, tubs, or sinks.
- Do not use spray attachments unless a backflow prevention device is installed on the faucet.

These devices are inexpensive and available at most hardware and home improvement stores. Ask for a hose bib vacuum breaker. One should be installed on all threaded faucets around your home, both inside and outside, or anywhere a hose may be connected.

Owners of industrial, commercial, and institutional properties are required to have their plumbing systems surveyed for cross-connections. This process helps protect employees, customers, and the public water supply from potential contamination.

For more information, please contact the Water Division at [dpwinfo@northamptonma.gov](mailto:dpwinfo@northamptonma.gov).



## Public Education and Water Awareness

Protecting drinking water is a shared responsibility. While the City treats and monitors water before it reaches your home, everyday activities, both indoors and outdoors, can affect water quality and the safety of the public water system. Small actions taken by residents, businesses, and visitors collectively make a meaningful difference in safeguarding this vital resource.

The Water Division is committed to helping the community understand how the water system works and how individual choices can support its protection. Educational efforts focus on practical, everyday topics such as:

- Using water efficiently and conserving during dry periods
- Preventing cross-connections and backflow in homes and businesses
- Properly storing and disposing of household chemicals, medications, and automotive fluids
- Protecting streams, wetlands, and watershed lands from pollution and disturbance

These efforts are designed to make it easy for customers to do the right thing, whether that means installing a simple backflow device, choosing water-wise landscaping practices, or keeping harmful materials out of storm drains and waterways.

Customers are encouraged to visit the City's website or contact the Water Division for information about conservation tools, seasonal water use restrictions, and best practices for protecting drinking water.

## Your Role in Protecting Water Quality

Everyone who lives, works, or visits Northampton plays a role in protecting the drinking water system. Simple, everyday actions can significantly reduce the risk of contamination and help preserve water quality for the entire community. Residents and businesses can help by:

- Installing hose bib vacuum breakers on outdoor faucets
- Avoiding submerging hoses in pools, buckets, or containers
- Properly disposing of household chemicals and medications
- Maintaining septic systems in good working order
- Being mindful of activities near streams, wetlands, and watershed lands

These small steps help prevent pollutants from entering the water system, protect public health, and support the long-term reliability of Northampton's drinking water supply. By staying informed and making thoughtful choices, every customer contributes to keeping the City's water clean, safe, and dependable for generations to come.

## Planning for the Future – Water System Needs and Improvements

Northampton's drinking water system is a vital public asset that requires ongoing planning and investment to remain safe, reliable, and resilient. Much of the City's water infrastructure has been developed over many decades. In addition, the City is preparing for emerging regulatory requirements and evolving best practices, including those related to lead service line inventory and replacement, emerging contaminants, and climate resiliency. Projects are evaluated and advanced as funding, design, and regulatory approvals allow.

## Understanding Your Water Service and Rates

Northampton's water system operates around the clock to provide clean, safe water for drinking, cooking, sanitation, and fire protection. Maintaining this level of service requires skilled staff, continuous monitoring, regular maintenance, and long-term planning. Water rates support daily operations, laboratory testing and regulatory compliance, emergency response and repairs, maintenance of reservoirs and pipelines, and planning for future improvements. Much of this work occurs behind the scenes, but it is essential. Thoughtful financial planning allows the City to invest in infrastructure responsibly and over time, helping to reduce the risk of sudden disruptions or emergency costs.

## Stormwater

Northampton has many pipes and drains that move stormwater off City streets and parking lots that are separate from the sanitary sewer and drinking water pipe systems. This collected runoff from developed areas flows directly into the City's rivers, brooks, ponds, and wetlands. Stormwater runoff may collect oil, gas, pesticides, pet waste, salt and other contaminants that can be present in developed areas. The City's stormwater drainage system is designed to prevent flooding and does not clean or treat stormwater before it is discharged to the environment. Keeping stormwater as clean as possible is essential to protecting the environment and meeting federal regulations. If everyone does a little to prevent stormwater pollution it will help keep Northampton's rivers, ponds, brooks and wetlands from becoming polluted.



Scan the QR code to learn more about stormwater and what you can do to help.

<https://www.northamptonma.gov/762/Stormwater-Flood-Control>

## Definitions

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

**Below Detection Limit (BDL):** Refers to a measurement result that is too low for the testing method or instrument to reliably detect or quantify.

**Detected Level:** This column represents an average of sample results collected during this calendar year. If only one sample was collected, there will not be a range listed in the adjacent column.

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

**Massachusetts Office of Research and Standards Guideline (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. If exceeded, it serves as an indicator of the potential need for further action.

**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 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.

**Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL):** The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

**Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG):** The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contamination.

**Minimum Reporting Level (MRL):** The minimum concentration that can be reported by a laboratory as a quantitated value for a method analyte in a sample following analysis.

**MGD:** Million gallons per day

**N/A:** Not Applicable

**N/D:** Non-detectable with type of testing conducted

**NTU:** Nephelometric turbidity units

**pCi/L:** picocuries per liter (a measurement of radioactivity)

**PFAS:** Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances

**90th Percentile:** Out of every 10 homes tested for lead and copper levels, 9 were at or below this level. We collected 30 samples, therefore the 90th percentile would be the 27th highest sample ( $30 \times 0.9 = 27$ ).

**ppb:** Parts per billion or micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ ) ppm – Parts per million, or milligrams per liter ( $\text{mg/L}$ ) ppt – Parts per trillion or nanograms per liter

**Running Annual Average (RAA):** The average of four consecutive quarters of data.

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

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

**Turbidity:** A measure of the cloudiness of the water. It is a good indicator of water quality. We measure turbidity in NTUs (Nephelometric Turbidity Units).

## Administrative and Distribution Statement

This Consumer Confidence Report (Water Quality Report) for Calendar Year 2025 was distributed to customers by July 1, 2026. A CCR Certification Form has been submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. A copy of this report has been provided to the Northampton Board of Health. Copies of this report are retained for at least three years in accordance with regulatory requirements.