

Town of Bridgewater

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Town of Bridgewater Issues Statement in Response to MassDEP Response

BRIDGEWATER — The Town of Bridgewater understands that residents have questions and concerns about their drinking water. People want to know that their water is safe and that the system can meet the town's needs now and into the future. Addressing these concerns is a top priority for us.

The Bridgewater Department of Public Works Water Division has been working closely with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) over the last several months to stabilize the system and move forward with both short-term improvements and sustainable, long-term changes.

Right now, Bridgewater is operating under a water supply emergency declaration issued in December after several wells experienced reduced production or water-quality challenges. To help us meet our needs while we work to correct those issues, the Town, in collaboration with the Town of Middleborough, and with the support of MassDEP, established an interconnection with Middleborough's water system. This has helped us meet our capacity needs without requiring the use of our two wells that contribute to discoloration with higher levels of iron and manganese.

At the same time, the Town is moving forward with treatment system projects that will enable those wells to come back online safely by filtering for both iron and manganese and PFAS. The work associated with that project is currently being designed and installed. It is expected to be completed in the late spring. These are well-established treatment methods that are used by water systems across the country.

We have also been working to improve production at our other pre-existing wells. Well redevelopment work at Well 3 recently allowed us to more than double that well's output, and maintenance work has also been completed at Well 8, which will improve capacity. Additional improvements to the system are planned this year.

Bridgewater has applied for a federal grant of up to \$2 million to help offset the cost of these treatment systems. The Town is working with MassDEP as the process moves toward final submission to the Environmental Protection Agency. Improving the capacity and filtration capabilities of public water districts is a priority at both the state and federal levels.

In addition to these steps, the Town is not allowing new tie-ins to its water system for non-approved projects while it is under this water emergency state.

We know residents want clear answers and steady progress. This is an issue that developed over many years, and it will take a significant investment of both time and funding to fully address. Bridgewater is actively working with state regulators and our engineering team to strengthen the system and ensure a safe, reliable water supply for generations to come.

We will continue to work closely with DEP, which oversees this work, and provide residents with regular updates as improvements progress. Town officials are committed to being transparent about the work underway and the steps being taken to address both short-term challenges and long-term needs within the water system.

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