

SAFE DRINKING WATER PROGRAM

DEP's Bureau of Safe Drinking Water is responsible for managing the federally delegated drinking water program and because we have primary enforcement authority (primacy), DEP implements both the federal and state Safe Drinking Water Acts and associated regulations. To control impacts to water, the Safe Drinking Water Program: protects all Pennsylvania residents and visitors from microbiological, chemical, and radiological contaminants in drinking water served at nearly 8,400 public water systems; conducts surveillance, compliance, enforcement, and permitting activities at public water systems to ensure compliance with safe drinking water standards; protects Pennsylvania's drinking water sources through proper planning and management of water resources and their uses; responds to water supply emergencies, such as floods, droughts, chemical spills, or waterborne disease outbreaks; and maintains a web-based reporting application to allow accredited laboratories and public water suppliers to report drinking water sample results electronically. The bureau also trains and certifies drinking water and wastewater operators for over 10,000 treatment plants.

Annually, the Safe Drinking Water Program produces the 'Pennsylvania Public Water System Annual Compliance Report.' For the 2022 calendar year, 2,185 sanitary surveys (full inspections) were completed and 12,308 compliance notices and notices of violations were issued. An overview of the program's most recent statistics is provided in Table 1, and within DEP's [2022 Annual Compliance Report](#).

Table 1. Overview of the Safe Drinking Water Program's compliance actions according to the latest report (2022).

Compliance Notices and Notices of Violations	12,308
Consent and Administrative Orders	513
Consent Assessments	22
Boil Water advisories (Community Systems)	21
Boil Water advisories (Noncommunity Systems)	78
Civil Penalties Collected	\$88,988

DEP's [2018 Disinfection Requirements Rule](#) (DRR) strengthened the requirements intended to guard against microbial contamination by ensuring the adequacy of treatment designed to inactivate microbial pathogens and ensuring the integrity of drinking water distribution systems. Public water suppliers treating surface water or Groundwater Under the Direct Influence of Surface Water (GUDI) sources must demonstrate compliance with existing log inactivation requirements by routinely reporting the level of disinfection being achieved. Additionally, public water systems required to provide disinfection are now required to maintain a specified minimum disinfectant residual throughout the distribution system, and water suppliers are required to conduct an investigation at locations with low residual levels to identify the cause and appropriate corrective actions. More information about Safe Drinking Water Program updates can be found in the latest edition of DEP's [Drinking Water News](#).

DEP's [2018 General Update and Fees Rule](#) (GUF) establishes the regulatory basis for issuing general permits, clarifies that noncommunity water systems (NCWS) require a permit or approval

from DEP prior to construction and operation, and addressed concerns regarding gaps in the monitoring, reporting, and tracking of back-up sources of supply. This rule also amended existing permit fees and added a new annual fee to supplement Commonwealth costs to ensure that DEP has adequate funding to enforce the applicable drinking water laws, meet state and federal minimum program elements, and retain primacy (primary enforcement authority). The new annual fee became effective CY 2019.

DEP's 2023 [PFAS MCL Rule](#) published on January 14, 2023 protects public health by setting state MCLs in drinking water for two perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) – perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS). PFAS are a large class of man-made synthetic chemicals that were created in the 1930s and 1940s for use in many industrial and manufacturing applications. PFAS have been widely used for their unique properties that make products repel water, grease and stains, reduce friction and resist heat. Because of their unique chemical structure, PFAS readily dissolve in water and are mobile, are highly persistent in the environment and bioaccumulate in living organisms over time. PFAS are considered emerging contaminants because research is ongoing to better understand the potential impacts to human and animal health.