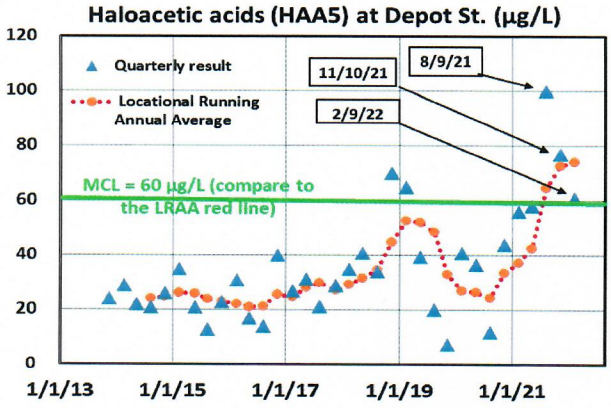
HOUSATONIC WATER WORKS COMPANY

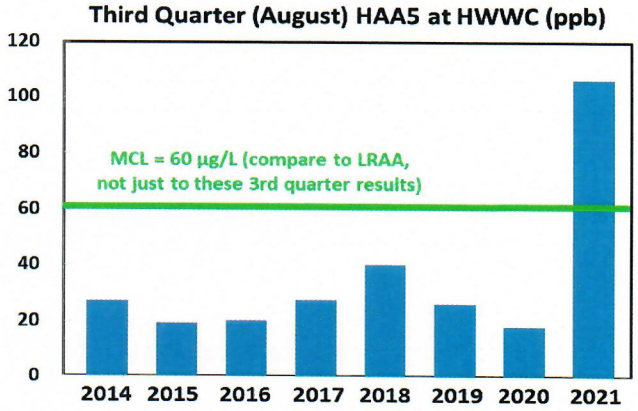
SINCE 1897

PRESS RELEASE

MARCH 30, 2022

Housatonic Water Works Company, Inc. (HWWCO) has announced in a letter to customers today the 1st quarter 2022 monitoring results for disinfection byproducts in the treated drinking water supply. For the third quarter in a row, the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 60 µg/L (or parts per billion, ppb) was exceeded for the DBP class of haloacetic acids (HAA5). This was expected, given the atypically high results from 3rd and 4th quarters 2021, and that MCL compliance is based on a Locational Running Annual Average (LRAA), so the August and November results are included as part of this quarter's compliance. February's result for HAA5 was 61 µg/L, bringing the LRAA to 74 µg/L, as shown in the below plot. HWWCO's DBP compliance samples are collected in February, May, August, and November.





HAA5 are disinfection byproducts (DBPs) that form when the chlorine disinfectant reacts with natural organic matter in the water. Per the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), people who drink water containing HAA5 in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

HWWCO recently submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) an evaluation of the cause of the relatively high HAA5 compounds found recently since August 2021. Those monitoring results were atypically high (see above plots), and were likely caused by historically heavy rainfall in July 2021.

As shown in the table below, HAA5 levels vary seasonally, with HWWCO's higher levels generally being in February (1st quarter) and lower levels in August (3rd quarter). That's part of why last August's high results were so unexpected.

Historical average HAA5 (2013 – 2021) vs. recent results (since August 2021) in µg/L (ppb)

Month	Historical average	Recent result	Recent difference from average	Recent sample date
August	22	103	+ 81	8/9/21
November	33	77	+ 44	11/10/21
February	40	61	+ 21	2/9/22
May	33	NA	NA	NA

80 Maple Avenue, Suite 1, Great Barrington, MA 01230

Tel: 413.528.1780
Fax: 413.528.3024
E-mail: housatonicwater@gmail.com
www.housatonicwater.com

The good news is that not only have the HAA5 sample results been decreasing since last August's atypically high value, but the difference compared to the historical average for their seasons has been decreasing, cutting in about half from August to November and then again in half from November to February. That suggests the water is returning to its more normal state in terms of the potential for formation of HAAs, though it is still somewhat elevated. In the past, the recent February HAA5 result of 61 µg/L generally would not have put the LRAA over the MCL, given February was usually the highest result of the four quarters.

In response to the HAA5 results, HWWCO has lowered the chlorine residual level while maintaining more than enough to exceed all disinfection requirements, and will be conducting increased monitoring for total organic carbon (TOC) in both the source water and treated water.

HWWCO's current slow sand filtration plant already does a very good job at removing natural organic matter, with TOC removals recently measured at 34% to 55%. That is impressive for slow sand filters, which typically are expected to remove only ~15 to 20% of the TOC. Perhaps this success is partly due to the well-established age of the microbial population and HWWCO XTJ2935's custom designed hydraulic rake filter cleaning system. Periodically cleaning the sand surface with water instead of physically removing the top layer of sand has allowed the sand to not be replaced in many years, providing better treatment while also saving you money.

A copy of the DBP evaluation report can be found on the HWWCO website (https://housatonicwater.com). The report was completed by HWWC's water quality consultant, Dr. Richard Gullick of Water Compliance Solutions, LLC. Dr. Gullick has a very successful record of DBP evaluations, and his research work on the formation and fate of disinfection byproducts is cited by USEPA in their guidance manual for conducting the DBP evaluations.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Haloacetic Acid 5 (HAA_5) MCL Violation at Housatonic Water Works Company

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard. Although this incident was not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we have done to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Testing results from the 1st Quarter of 2022 show that our system exceeded the standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for HAA_5. The standard for HAA_5 is 60 parts per billion (ppb). Compliance is determined by averaging all samples collected at each sampling location for the past 12 months (the Locational Running Annual Average). The level of HAA_5 averaged at our system's monitoring location for May 2021 through February 2022 was 74 ppb, with individual quarterly results ranging from 58 to 103 ppb. We also exceeded the MCL for HAA5 in August and November 2021, as we reported to you previously.

What should I do?

- **There is nothing you need to do. You DO NOT need to boil your water or take other corrective actions.** If a situation arises where the water is no longer safe to drink, you will be notified within 24 hours.
- However, if you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water.
- You may reduce your exposure by using bottled water for preparing formula, beverages, or food that retains water (e.g., hot cereals, rice, or pasta).

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been an emergency, you would have been notified within 24 hours. HAA_5 are five haloacetic acid compounds which form when disinfectants react with natural organic matter in the water. *People who drink water containing haloacetic acids in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.* [Please see the link https://www.mass.gov/service-details/haa5-in-drinking-water-information-for-consumers for a fact sheet on HAA_5.]

What is being done?

Historically, HWWC never had any HAA5 compliance issues prior to last summer. The HAA5 results from August 2021 were well above the average for that month (103 ppb vs. 22 ppb average), possibly a result of the historical record rains during July 2021 affecting the source water in Long Pond. Since then, the HAA5 levels have been lower, and the February 2022 result was 61 ppb.

The amount of disinfectant used impacts the formation of HAA_5, and there is a balance required between using chlorine to control pathogenic microorganisms and the undesirable byproducts of the chlorination process. In response to the HAA_5 levels observed, we have since reduced the chlorine dosing while maintaining more than enough chlorine residual to meet and exceed all disinfection requirements.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

For more information, please contact the Housatonic Water Works company at 413-528-1780, housatonicwater@gmail.com, or write to us at 80 Maple Ave, Suite 1, Great Barrington, MA 01230. This notice is being sent to you by the Housatonic Water Works Company. PWS ID #1113003.

Date distributed: 03/30/2022