

# 2023 Water Quality Report

For  
Holmes Park Water District  
Westminster, Massachusetts

MASSDEP PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY (PWS) ID No.: 2332001

We are pleased to present you with a Water Quality Report of the water provided to you during 2023. This report provides a snapshot of your drinking water quality over the past year. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to state and federal standards. We are committed to providing you with this information because informed customers are our best allies. The report also describes our system's operations and how you can get involved.

## **Public Water System Information**

Address: 33 Ridge Street, Westminster, MA 01473

Primary Operator: Joshua Hall

Telephone #: 978-874-5572

E-mail Address: [jhall@westminster-ma.gov](mailto:jhall@westminster-ma.gov)

### Holmes Park Board of Water Commissioners:

Scott Nussey – Chairperson

Scott Scarale – Water Commissioner

Gerald Douglass – Water Commissioner

Dick Martin – Treasurer

Telephone #: 978-632-7707

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The Holmes Park water system is routinely inspected by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MASSDEP) 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 Licensed Drinking Water Operators who oversee the routine operations of the system.

## **Public Participation**

If you would like to participate in discussions about your water, please contact the Board of Water Commissioners for information about upcoming meetings. You can also contact your certified water operator or the Board of Water Commissioners at any time with questions, comments or concerns regarding your drinking water.

## **Your Drinking Water Source**

***Where Does My Drinking Water Come From?*** The Holmes Park Water District customers receive water from the Town of Westminster (MASSDEP PWSID # 2332000), which purchases its water from the City of Fitchburg (MASSDEP PWSID # 2097000). In 2023, the District purchased 1.956 million gallons (MG) of treated water. Your water is treated at the Regional Treatment Facility located on Hager Park Road-Route 140 and can draw water from 3 reservoirs located in Westminster, Princeton, and Hubbardston. These reservoirs are Meetinghouse Pond, Mare Meadow Reservoir, and Bickford Pond. After the water leaves the reservoirs, the Treatment Facility treats the water to remove contaminants and adds disinfectant to protect our customer's against microbial contaminants. Once water is treated, it is pumped from Westminster's booster pump station, located just south of the Treatment Facility, into the distribution system to Westminster and Holmes Park water customers. Your water is provided by the sources listed below:

Source Name	MASSDEP Source ID#	Source Type	Location of Source
Meetinghouse Pond	2097000-01S	Surface water	Westminster
Mare Meadow Reservoir	2097000-06S	Surface water	Westminster & Hubbardston
Bickford Pond	2097000-09S	Surface water	Hubbardston & Princeton

**How Are These Sources Protected?** MASSDEP has prepared a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) Report for the water supply sources serving our water system. The SWAP Report assesses the susceptibility of public water supplies.

**What is My System's Ranking?** A susceptibility ranking of **high** was assigned to this system using the information collected during the assessment by the MASSDEP.

**Where Can I See The SWAP Report?** The complete SWAP report is available at the Westminster Water Department and online at <https://www.mass.gov/lists/source-water-assessment-and-protection-swap-program-documents#swap-reports-for-massachusetts-water-supplies>. For more information please contact the Fitchburg Water Division at 978-345-9616.

**What are the Key Issues for Our Water Supply?** The overall ranking of susceptibility to contamination for the system is **high**, based on possible microbial contaminants from aquatic wildlife. Also noted is a Medium Threat from septic systems, heating fuel oil storage at residences and the use of pesticides for lawn care/gardening in the watershed.

## **Substances Found In Tap Water**

The 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 byproducts 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, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and MASSDEP 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. 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 EPA's 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 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 (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 (1-800-426-4791).

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 Holmes Park Water District 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>.

## Water Quality Testing Results

The water quality information presented in the tables below is from the most recent round of testing done within the Holmes Park Water District's water system in accordance with the regulations. All data shown was collected during the last calendar year unless otherwise noted in the tables. All other water quality data can be found in the attached 2023 CCR from the Town of Westminster.

### Important Definitions

**MCL** (Maximum Contaminant Level): 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.

**MCLG** (Maximum Contaminant Level Goal): 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.

**MRDL** (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level): 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.

**MRDLG** (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal): 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.

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

**90<sup>th</sup> Percentile**: Out of every 10 homes sampled, 9 were at or below this level. This number is compared to the action level to determine lead and copper compliance.

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

**ppm** (parts per million or mg/L): 1 drop in 10 gallons, 1 inch in 16 miles or one penny in \$10,000.

**ppb** (parts per billion or ug/L): 1 drop in 10,000 gallons, 1 inch in 16,000 miles, one penny in \$10,000,000.

**A Level 1 Assessment** is a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system.

### REGULATED SUBSTANCES

Disinfectants & Disinfection By-products	Date(s) Collected	Highest Result or Average	Range Detected	MCL or MRDL	MCLG or MRDLG	Violation (Y/N)	Possible Sources
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5s) (ppb)	Quarterly	40 <sup>1</sup>	38-46	60	--	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) (ppb)	Quarterly	70 <sup>1</sup>	38-96	80	--	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Chlorine (ppm)	2 Times a Month	0.39	0.04-0.89	4 (MRDL)	4 (MRDLG)	No	Water additive used to control microbes

<sup>1</sup> Result based on Highest Running Annual Average (RAA) of four consecutive quarters.

Lead and Copper	Date Collected	90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Action Level (AL)	MCLG	# of Sites Sampled	# of Sites above AL	Exceeds AL (Y/N)	Possible Sources
Lead <sup>2</sup> (ppb)	2022 <sup>4</sup>	3	15	0	5	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing; erosion of natural deposits
Copper <sup>3</sup> (ppm)	2022 <sup>4</sup>	0.11	1.3	1.3	5	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives

<sup>2</sup> Infants and children who drink water containing lead in excess of the action level could experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure.

<sup>3</sup> Copper is an essential nutrient, but some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over a relatively short amount of time could experience gastrointestinal distress. Some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over many years could suffer liver or kidney damage. People with Wilson's disease should consult their personal doctor.

<sup>4</sup> 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 more than one year old.

Coliforms are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially harmful, waterborne pathogens may be present or that a potential pathway exists through which contamination may enter the drinking water distribution system. We found coliforms indicating the need to look for potential problems in water treatment or distribution. When this occurs, we are required to conduct assessments to identify any problems that were found during these assessments.

During the past year, we were required to conduct one (1) Level 1 Assessment. One (1) Level 1 Assessment was completed. In addition, we were required to take one (1) corrective action and we have completed this action.

### **What is a Cross Connection and what can I do about it?**

A cross connection is a connection between a drinking water pipe and a polluted source. The pollution can come from your own home. For instance, you're going to spray fertilizer on your lawn. You hook up your hose to the sprayer that contains the fertilizer. If the water pressure drops at the same time you turn on the hose, the fertilizer may be sucked back into the drinking water pipes through the hose. Never submerge a hose in soapy water buckets, pools, tubs, sinks, drains or chemicals. The garden hose causes the most common cross connection. This problem can be prevented by using an attachment on your hose called a backflow-prevention device.

The Holmes Park Water District recommends the installation of backflow prevention devices, such as a low cost hose bib vacuum breaker, for all inside and outside hose connections. You can purchase this at a hardware store or plumbing supply store. This is a great way for you to help protect the water in your home as well as the drinking water system in your community. For additional information on cross connections and on the status of your water system cross connection program, please contact us at (978) 874-5572.

### **Water Conservation**

Did you know that the average U.S. household uses approximately 400 gallons of water per day or 100 gallons per person per day? Luckily, there are many low-cost and no-cost ways to conserve water. Small changes can make a big difference – try one today and soon it will become second nature.

- Take short showers - a 5 minute shower uses 4 to 5 gallons of water compared to up to 50 gallons for a bath.
- Shut off water while brushing your teeth, washing your hair and shaving and save up to 500 gallons a month.
- Use a water-efficient showerhead. They're inexpensive, easy to install, and can save you up to 750 gallons a month.
- Run your clothes washer and dishwasher only when they are full. You can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.
- Water plants only when necessary.
- Fix leaky toilets and faucets. Faucet washers are inexpensive and take only a few minutes to replace. To check your toilet for a leak, place a few drops of food coloring in the tank and wait. If it seeps into the toilet bowl without flushing, you have a leak. Fixing it or replacing it with a new, more efficient model can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.
- Adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered. Apply water only as fast as the soil can absorb it and during the cooler parts of the day to reduce evaporation.
- Teach your kids about water conservation to ensure a future generation that uses water wisely. Make it a family effort to reduce next month's water bill!
- Visit <https://www.epa.gov/watersense> for more information.

### **Source Water Protection**

Protection of drinking water is everyone's responsibility. You can help protect your community's drinking water source in several ways:

- Eliminate excess use of lawn and garden fertilizers and pesticides – they contain hazardous chemicals that can reach your drinking water source.
- Pick up after your pets.
- If you have your own septic system, properly maintain your system to reduce leaching to water sources or consider connecting to a public water system.
- Dispose of chemicals properly; take used motor oil to a recycling center.

**Additional copies of this Water Quality Report and the Westminster Department of Public Works Water Quality Report can be obtained upon request from the Holmes Park Water District or by contacting Joshua Hall at 978-874-5572.**