



## Town of Monson, Water & Sewer Department

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**Commissioners:** Douglas R. North – Chairman, Marshall L. Harris – Vice Chairman, Stephen C. Lobik – Clerk

**Staff:** Craig W. Jalbert – Superintendent, Thomas J. Murphy - Assistant Superintendent,

Dave F. Martin - W&S Maintenance Man, Dale S. Barnes-Johnson – Secretary

We are dedicated to providing a safe, dependable and affordable supply of drinking water to our customers. For more information about your water system, please visit [Our Page](#) on the Town's Web-Site at [www.monson-ma.gov](http://www.monson-ma.gov)

## MONSON'S 2005 WATER QUALITY REPORT

Water is a part of our lives that many people never think about, however we do every day. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water which we monitor and test accordingly, ensuring that you receive the safest and highest quality drinking water possible. In addition to the results of our 2005 water quality testing, we would like to take this opportunity to inform you of improvements we have made to our water system, and share tips on how you can help to protect our wells and use water wisely.

During calendar year 2005 we completed the Bunyan Rd. well improvement project. Funding for the project included \$200,000 in grant money from the USDA Rural Utilities Service. The two new replacement wells went online in August of 2005 and together can supply over 600 gallons per minute (gpm) to the Town's distribution system. Another major undertaking for 2005 was the Hospital Road reconstruction project which was awarded to low-bidder Palmer Paving Corporation. That project included replacing over 4000 feet of six inch water main that was originally installed in the 1930's with new twelve inch cement lined ductile iron.

Water is a precious natural resource that should be protected and used wisely. The Department in cooperation with the Mass Rural Water Association began working on a Source Water Protection Plan for the Town of Monson. When completed and adopted this plan will assist us in minimizing risks to our water sources and provide common sense guidelines for future growth and development. Remember to protect your drinking water through proper auto care and waste disposal and remember to take hazardous household chemicals to hazardous materials collection days. If you choose to fertilize think about using organic types. Please follow the directions and use only what is necessary, more is not always better. It may seem like there is a lot of water in our world, but only a small amount of it is drinkable and it is important to protect it. Water is essential to sustaining life, yet is often taken for granted every day. An average person can live more than a month without food, but only about a week without water.

The Commission and staff strive to provide the highest quality drinking water possible while making high priority system improvements when it is fiscally beneficial and avoid significant water rate increases. The Board meets on alternate Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. at the Monson Water Dept.; meetings are posted at the town offices, on our [web page](#) and in the newspaper. The public is always invited to attend or contact us with any concerns you may have with your water quality. Your support is appreciated as we improve and upgrade the water system while keeping rates at or below the state average and ensuring you receive the best service possible 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.

**Sources of 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. Contaminates that may be present in source water include: **Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria; **Inorganic contaminants**, such as salts and metals; **Pesticides and herbicides**, may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff and residential uses; **Organic chemical contaminants**, include synthetic and volatile organic chemicals that are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production; **Radioactive contaminants** which can be naturally-occurring or be a result of oil and gas production, and mining activities.

**Monson's Water Sources** ~ Monson has three groundwater sources located along the Chicopee Brook. The Bethany Road Well (1191000-03G), located along the East side of Chicopee Brook just North of the center of Monson, was installed in 1950 and is our supplementary source during times of high demand. The Palmer Road Well (1191000-04G) located off of Rt.32 along the west side of Chicopee Brook serves as our secondary supply and was installed in 1965. The Bunyan Road well-field was established in the late 1960s in the northern end of town located along the West Side of the Chicopee Brook. The two new Replacement Wells (1191000-06G & 07G) that we constructed there went on line in August of 2005 and now serve as our primary sources. You can help protect our water sources by notifying the Police Dept. or our office if you notice any suspicious activity in the vicinity of any of our wells.

**How Is Monson's Water Treated?** ~ The Monson Water Department has had a corrosion control program active since February of 1996 at our Bunyan Road Well and since August of 2002 at our Palmer Road Well in the form of Soda Ash feed systems. Soda Ash (Sodium Carbonate) is used to raise the pH of our source water to a level that minimizes corrosion to our distribution system and our customers plumbing. The chemical feed systems are inspected and monitored 7 days a week by the Water Department staff as per DEP requirements.

**Cross Connection Program** ~ 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 (say because of fire hydrant use in the town) when the hose is connected to the fertilizer, the fertilizer may be sucked back into the drinking water pipes through the hose. Using an attachment on your hose called a backflow-prevention device can prevent this problem. The Monson Water Department 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 device 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 town! For additional information on cross connections and on the status of your water system's cross connection program, please contact us.

**Our Testing Program** ~ In calendar year 2005, the Massachusetts DEP maintained our reduced monitoring status for lead and copper sampling and also continued our monitoring waivers for Synthetic Organic Compounds (SOC) at all of our wells and for Volatile Organic Contaminants (VOC) at the Bunyan Rd. well-field because those sources were found to be not at risk of contamination. Samples for lead and copper were last collected on 9/7/2005 and demonstrated that we continue to meet all applicable EPA and DEP standards. SOC samples were collected on 2/24/2003 at all active wells and were found to be free of those contaminants. VOC samples were collected on 5/24/2005 and 12/6/2005 at our wells and all were found to be free of those contaminants as well.

## MONSON (PWS ID# 1191000) 2005 Water Quality Test Results

The table below lists all the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the 2005 calendar year. Unless otherwise noted, the presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. The water quality information presented in the table is from the most recent round of testing done in accordance with the regulations. All data shown were collected during the last calendar year unless otherwise noted in the table. Below the table are the terms, abbreviations and definitions used in the table.

Contaminant	Level Detected	Highest Detect Value	MCL	MCLG	Sample Date	Violation Yes/No	Likely Source	
Nitrate	0.94 - 1.9 ppm	1.9 ppm	10 ppm	10 ppm	7/20/2005	No	Runoff from fertilizer use, leaching from septic tanks, erosion of natural deposits	
Barium	0.037 - 0.056 ppm	0.056 ppm	2 ppm	2 ppm	7/20/2005	No	Discharge from drilling wastes & metal refineries, erosion of natural deposits	
Sodium	30.0 - 51.0 ppm	51.0 ppm	none	none	7/20/2005	No	Erosion of natural deposits	
Sulfate	12.0 - 13.0 ppm	13.0 ppm	none	none	7/20/2005	No	Erosion of natural deposits	
Gross Alpha Activity	0.14 - 0.31 pCi/L	0.31 pCi/L	15 pCi/L	0 pCi/L	9/22/2003	No	Erosion of natural deposits	
Radium 228	0.34 - 0.82 pCi/L	0.82 pCi/L	5 pCi/L	0 pCi/L	9/22/2003	No	Erosion of natural deposits	
Contaminant	Level Detected	Action Level	90th Percentile	Sites Sampled	Sites Above Action Level	Violation Yes/No	Sample Date	Likely Source
Copper	0.012 - 0.25 ppm	1.3 ppm	0.17 ppm	20	0	No	9/7/2005	Household plumbing
Lead	<1.0 - 25.0 ppb	15.0 ppb	9.9 ppb	20	2	No	9/7/2005	Household plumbing

**Action Level (AL)** = The concentration of contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must implement; **Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)** = The level of contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health; **Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)** = The highest level of contaminant that is allowed in drinking water; **n/a** = not applicable; **nd** = not detectable at testing limit; **ppb** = parts per billion (1 drop in 10,000 gallons); **ppm** = parts per million (1 drop in 10 gallons); **pCi/L** = picocuries per liter; **mg/L** = milligrams per liter; **90th percentile** = for every 10 sites tested 9 are at or below the action level.

 **Health Information** ~ The EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA 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 contamination. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. 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 from their health care providers. Contact EPA's **Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791** for more information about contaminants and potential health effects; and EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants.

 **Fluoride** is not added to the town's drinking water. Parents should discuss their children's fluoride needs with their pediatrician or dentist.

**Water Main Flushing** ~ To ensure our water quality is at its best our flushing program will continue during 2006. Prior to flushing, notices will be published in the Hometown Section of the Springfield Republican paper and broadcast on MPACT. Updates will appear on our web-site providing the expected daily flushing area. We apologize for any reductions in pressure or discolored water that this may cause. The discolored water may not be aesthetically pleasing, but it will be temporary and it is not harmful, however we do advise you to take precautions regarding your laundry routine.



 **Water Saving Tips** ~ Small drips can waste up to 100 gallons of water a day. Repair leaky faucets, pipes, showerheads, plumbing fixtures and toilets to avoid high water bills and wasted water. Please do not leave the water running while brushing your teeth. This can needlessly waste 4 to 6 gallons of water every time you brush, turning off the water when you are not using it will save water and save you money.

If you haven't already done so, update your toilet to a modern unit. They use 1/3 of the water an older toilet uses. When washing dishes or laundry, wait until you have a full load. If you are contemplating buying a new clothes washing machine consider purchasing a new water efficient front loading model. In the yard, established lawns and most plants require only an inch of water a week. Lawns and plants do not need to be watered every other day, or on a fixed schedule. Please only water when needed (grass does not move back when stepped on). If you choose to water your lawn, do so only during the cooler parts of the day, watering in the early morning or evening hours minimizes evaporation. Use mulch to retain water, an equivalent-sized patch of a mulched flower bed uses 4 times less water than a patch of lawn. Use drought tolerant plants, and add shade trees and shrubs to protect your lawn from the scorching sun. Visit our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page on the Town's Web-Site at [www.monson-ma.gov](http://www.monson-ma.gov) for more conservation tips. Conservation works as the Town's water usage was the lowest it's been in over 30 years in 2005. We pumped 167,048,000 gallons of drinking water from the town wells at an average rate of 457,665 gallons per day. Our peak day was August 2, 2005 when we pumped 1,111,000 gallons.

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