



MASSACHUSETTS WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY

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Information on Malden Water Quality Testing Results

Federal and state regulations require many water quality tests to ensure the water is safe. Specifically, MWRA conducts hundreds of thousands of tests per year on over 120 contaminants (a complete list is available on www.mwra.com). MWRA and local water departments test 300 to 500 water samples each week for chlorine residual, temperature, total coliform bacteria and *E. coli*. Testing for chlorine disinfectant residual helps us ensure that water is protected all the way to your faucet, and for total coliform bacteria to see if there are potential problems within the pipe network. Total coliform bacteria are generally not considered a health risk. We also test for *E. coli* bacteria to determine that the water is free of contamination and safe to drink. Samples are tested by MWRA's Certified Laboratory in Chelsea, MA (MA-DEP Certification # M-27451).

Malden staff also conduct weekly drinking water quality testing under the Total Coliform Rule at 18 locations within the City's distribution system to evaluate system performance and to ensure that the water is safe. Sampling includes tests for chlorine disinfectant residual, total coliform and *E. coli*.

According to drinking water regulations, if total coliform is detected in more than 5 percent of samples in a month, the water system is required to investigate the possible source and fix any identified problems. Due to coliform positive detections within Malden, in August and September, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has been working with Malden, and Malden is performing an assessment of the system to ensure issues are found and fixed within the pipe network, such as closed valves, areas with low flow and old water, or old unlined cast iron pipes. No *E. coli* positives were detected in any of the samples. MWRA has also been working with Malden, and has verified that MWRA water treatment has met all requirements and regulatory standards.

While Malden has had some isolated positive coliform test results in the area of Bryant and Boylston Streets, recent rounds of drinking water testing show the system is now free of total coliform and samples continue to be negative for *E. coli*. These sampling events occurred on September 24th and October 1st and included a full round of testing at 18 locations throughout Malden: laboratory analysis results are attached below.

The presence of total coliform in older systems during warm summer months can occur as cast iron mains with iron tuberculation (interior rust) reduce chlorine levels and can allow total coliform bacteria to grow. Actions including hydrant flushing, pipe cleaning or replacement can alleviate such issues. Also, MWRA understands Malden plans to replace the cast iron main located on Boylston and Bryant Street with one made of ductile iron, in the coming year. MWRA considers this pipeline replacement project a worthwhile investment in the Malden distribution system.

For additional information on MWRA's water sources, water quality, and treatment, see www.MWRA.com.