

Water Supply District of Acton

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Board of Water Commissioners Meeting Agenda

Monday, November 4, 2024 @ 7:00 PM

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, meetings are being held virtually via Zoom

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- **Comments from the public**
- **Approve minutes from the meetings of 10/21 and 10/24**
- **Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually**

OLD BUSINESS:

- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
 - Current sample data, if available
 - Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades
- US EPA Lead & Copper Rule Improvements
 - Draft notices for unknown and galvanized requiring replacement
 - Discussion of service line replacement responsibility

NEW BUSINESS:

- W.R. Grace Superfund Site Open House 11/12/24

Any agenda item(s) which did not come to the attention of the Board of Water Commissioners 48 hours prior to this meeting and were not reasonably anticipated.

Board of Water Commissioners

Meeting Agenda

October 21, 2024

- Comments from the public
- Approve minutes from the meetings of 10/7
- Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually

OLD BUSINESS:

- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
- Current sample data, if available
- Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades
- Kelley's Corner Project
- US EPA Lead & Copper Rule Improvements
- Request for service outside of District boundary

NEW BUSINESS:

- 10/13 water main break on Prospect Street
- Great Hill Cell Tower Lease Extension
- Discussion of Q3 Water Consumption

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

Commissioners: Barry Rosen (Chair), Erika Amir Lin, Stephen Stuntz

Finance Committee: Ron Parenti,

District Manager: Matt Mostoller

Environmental Manager: Katy Orciuch

Members of the Public: John Petersen, Allison Jones, Kim Kastens

START OF MINUTES

Mr. Rosen opened the meeting at 7:00.

Comments from the public

None at this time.

Approve minutes from the meetings of 10/7

Mr. Rosen and Mr. Mostoller noted a correction to the 10-7 minutes. Under New Business where it says “the company is just over the town line” has been corrected to “the property is just over the town line”.

Ms. Amir Lin motioned to approve the minutes of 10-7-24 as corrected. Mr. Rosen seconded, and it was approved via a roll call vote; Ms. Amir Lin, Mr. Rosen. Mr. Stuntz abstained.

Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually

Ms. Amir Lin motioned to appoint Mr. Rosen to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually, until the next regularly scheduled meeting. Mr. Stuntz seconded, and it was unanimously approved via a roll call vote; Mr. Stuntz, Ms. Amir Lin, Mr. Rosen.

Introduction of New Environmental Manager

Mr. Mostoller introduced Katy Orciuch as the new Environmental Manager. She is joining the District from her current position at the Cambridge Water Department and is a resident of Stow. The team is very pleased to have her on board.

Ms. Orciuch introduced herself to the board. She is looking forward to starting this week. Ms. Orciuch explained her background working for Cambridge for over 10 years, most recently as a Water Quality Supervisor, and before that as a Treatment Plant Operator. She’s excited to learn about the water system, and the projects the District has going on.

Mr. John Petersen commented that the finance committee is very excited that Ms. Orciuch has joined the team and looks forward to filling other staff vacancies.

OLD BUSINESS:

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

Current sample data, if available

Mr. Mostoller shared the October sampling results for South and North Acton, both were sampled on October 9th. South Acton sampled at 15.5 ppt, and North remains at non-

detect. Both are currently in operation. Staff plan to keep Center Acton offline for the rest of October as they have enough capacity and flushing has been completed. Mr. Mostoller added that by keeping Center Acton offline they will not need another October sample, and it avoids the 1.5-2-day process of turning the plant back on.

Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades

Mr. Mostoller updated the board on progress at the South Acton plant. Concrete work will be finished by the end of the month. Unfortunately, the structure will not be delivered in November as originally planned. The vessels and structure will be delivered at the end of January or beginning of February. The building manufacturer has agreed to store the structure at their yard to prevent any damage.

The Center Acton project is going well. With better temperatures this week they hope to pour concrete. They are in the midst of color selection and will have to break with the current color scheme so the building can blend into the trees better. The Center Acton project has two outstanding pay requests. The District does not have the finalized loans from the Clean Water Trust so they are sitting on these two requests and hoping the interim loan will be finalized this week. Ms. McCarthy has been in contact with bond counsel and paperwork for both projects is in progress. The South Acton project has also received its first pay request this week, they need to finalize this interim loan after the Center Acton Loan is finalized.

Mr. Mostoller noted that he and Ms. McCarthy have some concerns about the pre-purchases of items for these projects and their impact on Free Cash. Mr. Mostoller reported they did not meet the September deadline to have the District reimbursed so the expenses will be deducted from our available Free Cash. This means there will be less available Free Cash for the coming year, but there will be carry over when they are reimbursed. This is mostly an accounting issue where the cost will appear on the books, but the reimbursement will not, they do not know if this will appear as a negative amount in Free Cash. Mr. Stuntz asked about the amount which Mr. Mostoller responded is just over 1 million. Mr. Rosen asked if the vessels for both projects will be late, which Mr. Mostoller affirmed, but noted Center Acton might be delivered early depending on the pace of work on the foundation.

Kelley's Corner Project

Work on Kelley's Corner has paused as they wait for progress on the Sewer project so they can complete the Northern Section.

US EPA Lead & Copper Rule Improvements

Mr. Mostoller reported that on this past Wednesday evening, October 16, at 9:00 PM the District submitted its initial Service Line Inventory. The Inventory is not in perfect condition, but they met the majority of DEP's requirements. There are several service lines they could not validate; those will likely be noted in the deficiency letter and the District will have two weeks to correct those deficiencies. They will now begin working on how to improve the Inventory and move on to the next steps. The next phase will work on getting those lines that do need replacement based on the presence of a lead gooseneck or galvanized line, and looking into other unknowns in the inventory.

Mr. Rosen asked if the unknown service lines cluster in an older neighborhood. Mr. Mostoller responded they are scattered across the District. Mr. Mostoller added that in combing through historical documents they found some specifications from post-lead-ban decades, but there remain prominent gaps from the 1950's, 60's, and 70's, corresponding to a large period of building in Acton.

The District has between now and November 16th to notify residents about unknown service line materials or leaded lines that need replacement. The majority of these notices will be for unknown service lines, so the District will be providing additional informational language. Mr. Mostoller warned the board that this notice will garner community interest and inquiries, they have already had several people reach out with questions. Ms. Amir Lin asked about the nature of these inquiries. Mr. Mostoller replied that many are asking if they have lead pipes and what action they should take. Mr. Mostoller has been directing these inquiries to the self-identification resources to assist the District in collecting important information. To date they have not identified a single true Leaded Line in Acton, and Mr. Mostoller finds it unlikely that they would find one. For the private line identification, Mr. Mostoller reported that staff are assisting people with the process and in some cases going into basements to identify the pipes themselves. Mr. Mostoller has continued looking into software providers that can assist with this process.

Request for service outside of District boundary

Mr. Mostoller returned this item to the board to continue their discussion with Mr. Stuntz in attendance. Mr. Rosen reviewed the information of the request. Mr. Stuntz shared his thoughts with the board on the request, stating that he's not inclined to outright reject this kind of request, especially since Sudbury Water District is near that parcel and could assist Acton with connection, but he confirmed that does not believe the Acton Water District can supply this request entirely on their own right now. Mr. Stuntz stated that while he

thought the request was unlikely to be approved, he thought it prudent to offer an alternative path.

Mr. Rosen reiterated his concerns from the previous meeting, that this request could draw 110,000 gallons per day, and the District's consistent messaging has asked rate payers to conserve. Mr. Rosen also expressed his concern that the District has an existing charter to serve Boxborough, who could request water in the near future. If such a request came in, it would make it difficult to provide the additional water to the parcel in Maynard. Mr. Rosen continued to share his concerns presented at the previous meeting including the lack of capacity in Maynard for this request, and the previous history with the Power Mill Place project.

Mr. Stuntz and Mr. Rosen continued to discuss their thoughts on the request. Mr. Rosen asked Mr. Mostoller if the company making the request has asked Sudbury. Mr. Mostoller responded he knows the company was told to reach out to Concord and Sudbury along with Acton, but he does not know if that request has been made to Sudbury officials.

Mr. Mostoller informed the board that from his correspondence with the representatives of the request, they are likely looking for a clear yes or no if the process for providing water out of District bounds will move forward. Mr. Mostoller and the Board continued to discuss their response to the request. The board agreed to deny the request at the moment but instructed Mr. Mostoller to inform the representatives that they can come back in the next 5-10 years and make the request again.

Mr. Rosen motioned for the Board to deny the Request for Service outside the District boundary in Maynard. Mr. Stuntz seconded, and the denial was unanimously approved via a roll call vote; Ms. Amir Lin, Mr. Stuntz, Mr. Rosen.

NEW BUSINESS:

10/13 water main break on Prospect Street

Mr. Mostoller explained to the board that this water main break is on the agenda because this was a significant outage, and because there was some media coverage on Channel 7 News. Staff onsite during the break offered to answer questions or provide a statement to the reporters, but their offer was declined. Regarding the outage, Mr. Mostoller reported that some customers were out of water for almost 24 hours. There was a broken gate which required a larger area to be shut down, and there was a presence of a high-pressure sewer main that warranted cautious excavation. Over 30 homes and the Temple were out of water. Mr. Mostoller extended his thanks to the operations team for their efforts. Ms. Amir Lin asked if the new vacuum truck was useful, which Mr. Mostoller affirmed got a lot

of use during this break. Mr. Stuntz asked where excavation debris is put, and Mr. Mostoller responded that it is brought to the property by the office. Mr. Rosen asked about another water main break in the area. Mr. Mostoller explained the details of that break, that drainage work nicked a pipe, and the old valve could not be shut off. Mr. Mostoller then briefly talked about decommissioning old lines.

Great Hill Cell Tower Lease Extension

Mr. Mostoller informed the board he received an official letter from Crown Castle, requesting the final five-year extension on the existing contract for the Great Hill Cell Tower Lease. The request originally asked to extend the lease and change some terms. Upon review Mr. Mostoller informed them that the requested changes would not be allowed because of the terms of the 2008 vote authorizing the lease, so the current request is for the final five years of the lease, ending in 2030.

Mr. Mostoller is working with District Counsel to write up a warrant article for the voters to approve the next iteration of this lease. Ms. Amir Lin asked if this would be on this years warrant, which Mr. Mostoller said would be likely. Mr. Rosen asked how many years they wanted to lease the tower for. Mr. Mostoller responded they originally requested 30, but the District typically does 20 with extensions. Mr. Mostoller then briefly discussed the conversations with Crown Castle over their requested changes.

Mr. Stuntz motioned to approve the final five-year lease extension on the Crown Castle Great Hill Cell Phone Tower lease. Mr. Rosen seconded, and it was unanimously approved via a roll call vote; Mr. Stuntz, Ms. Amir Lin, Mr. Rosen.

Discussion of Q3 Water Consumption

Mr. Mostoller informed the board that they had received many inquiries from customers about an increase in their summer usage. Like in years past, the third quarter had the highest consumption of all the quarters, and this quarter had more inquiries coming in than usual. Many of the inquiries were based on costs and could be attributed to the rate increase and increased use. However, as Mr. Mostoller continued his conversations with customers and reviewed the numbers some other factors seem to be driving this increase in consumption.

Mr. Mostoller explained that July did not have the 1 day per week restriction as in years past, which contributed to the increase. Mr. Mostoller also noted they noticed an increase in the number of potential leaks identified by our metering technology or use analysis. He explained how the meters monitor leaks, and how the Water Smart program would flag

leaks based on past use. This July saw the highest number of flagged leaks in the Water Smart program since its inception.

Mr. Mostoller wanted to emphasize for customers to sign up for the Water Smart program to catch leaks more quickly rather than letting the entire quarter pass with a leak going undetected. It is the staff's opinion that this combination of factors is the source of many of the customer inquiries that first seem to concern cost.

Ms. Amir Lin commented that she was struck by the irrigation use. Mr. Mostoller replied that without the 1-day restriction, many people did increase their irrigation use.

Mr. Mostoller continued to explain the leaks, noting one exceptional leak that will be repaired tomorrow, that may seek an abatement. The September reading suggested that there may be a leak, which they informed the customer of. The leak worsened significantly in October leading to a bill of \$18,000 over the month. Staff went out and shut off the water and are working with the homeowner to quickly make repairs due to the severity of the leak.

Mr. Mostoller advocated that customers be rigorous about leaks, even if they don't appear in the home, as toilets and irrigation systems can leak tremendously without the usual indicators. He then recommended that folks take the opportunity to look for leaks whenever they shut down their irrigation systems for the season.

Ms. Amir Lin asked if the District will push for more people to join the Water Smart program next year. Mr. Mostoller affirmed they will keep advertising the program, which is free and requires no infrastructure, and gives the customers access to monthly meter readings. Mr. Mostoller then reviewed the benefits of building out the Water Smart program.

Mr. John Petersen asked if there is any part of Mass Save that covers water use. Mr. Mostoller affirmed Mass Save does have shower heads, but inspection is challenging. For irrigation there are companies that are Water Sense rated but at last check, only two are certified in Massachusetts.

Mr. Stuntz motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Amir Lin seconded, and it was unanimously via a roll call vote; Ms. Amir Lin, Mr. Stuntz, Mr. Rosen.

Meeting closed at 8:04 pm

Board of Water Commissioners

Meeting Agenda

Thursday, October 24, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

Held in person at 693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton MA 01720

AGENDA

- Comments from the public

NEW BUSINESS:

- Vote to approve the Interim Financing Loan(s) for the Center Acton PFAS Project DWEC-23-127 (DWSRF-12517) and the South Acton PFAS Project DWEC-23-126 (DWSRF-12506).

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

Commissioners: Erika Amir Lin, Stephen Stuntz

District Manager: Matt Mostoller

District Treasurer: Christine McCarthy

START OF MINUTES

Ms. Amir Lin opened the meeting at 6:01 PM

Comments from the public

None at this time.

Vote to approve the Interim Financing Loan(s) for the Center Acton PFAS Project DWEC-23-127 (DWSRF-12517) and the South Acton PFAS Project DWEC-23-126 (DWSRF-12506)

Mr. Mostoller presented the interim loan note, closing certificate, and Bond Counsel opinion.

Ms. Amir Lin motioned: Vote to approve the Interim Financing Loan(s) for the Center Acton PFAS Project DWEC-23-127 (DWSRF-12517) and the South Acton PFAS Project DWEC-23-126 (DWSRF-12506) and sign the related closing certificate.

Mr. Stuntz seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Mr. Stuntz motioned to adjourn until the next regularly scheduled meeting. Ms. Amir Lin seconded, and it was unanimously approved.

Meeting Closed at 6:04 PM.

Acton Water District DRINKING WATER NOTICE

Your home is served by a service line that may contain lead.

This notice contains important information about your drinking water. Have someone translate it for you or speak with someone who understands it.

Dear Customer,

Water systems are now required to document all water service line materials and identify any lead or lead containing materials. Our most recent inventory has determined that a portion of, or the entire, water pipe (called a service line) that connects your building to the water main are of **unknown material classification**. Unknown means that the service line could contain lead. Most service lines in Acton are made of copper or plastic, unfortunately we do not have all the records necessary to document this and we continue to make progress on confirming the service line material.

As a precaution, here is information on the health effects of lead and steps to reduce your exposure. **If your service line is confirmed as lead, the Acton Water District will take full responsibility to remove it and replace it with one made of a safer material.**

Health effects of lead.

Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems.

Until the material of your service line is confirmed and any lead is removed, use the following steps to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water.

- **Run your water to flush out lead.** Lead levels increase over time as water sits in lead-containing plumbing materials. Before drinking or cooking with your water after it has sat overnight or longer, flush your home's pipes by running water through the kitchen faucet, taking a shower, or doing any other non-consumptive water usage. Run the water for at least 1 minute or until after it turns cold. The amount of time to run the water will depend on whether your home has a lead service line or not, as well as the length and diameter of the service line and the amount of plumbing in your home.
- **Use only cold, fresh water for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula.** Run the water for at least 1 minute or until after it turns cold.
- **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water does not remove lead.
- **Clean your aerator.** Regularly clean your faucet's screen (also known as an aerator). Sediment, debris, and lead particles can collect in your aerator. Lead particles can release lead into your water. See how to clean your aerator at [important-resources-for-safe-drinking-water.pdf \(epa.gov\)](#).
- **Use your filter properly, if you use a filter.** Filters can reduce lead in drinking water. Make sure it is certified by NSF to remove lead- it will say so on the package. Follow directions to properly install, use, and replace your filter. Do not run hot water through the filter. For more information, and which certifications to look for, visit EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/water-research/consumer-tool-identifying-point-use-and-pitcher-filters-certified-reduce-lead>.
- **Identify and replace plumbing fixtures** containing lead and any copper piping with lead solder.
- **Have your child's blood tested for lead.** Children are a higher risk group of the health effects of lead. If you would like to have your child tested, you may contact your health care provider, or local state health department here: **Acton Health Department (978) 929-6632 or Massachusetts Department of Public Health (617) 624-6000.**
- **Have your water tested for lead. You cannot see, taste or smell lead in drinking water.** Contact our system for more information about lead in your drinking water and how to get your water tested by a state

certified laboratory. See the list of labs here: [Certified Laboratory Search Results](https://www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-certified-laboratory-for-water-testing)
(<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-certified-laboratory-for-water-testing>).

Opportunities to Verify Lead Service Materials

(1) To verify the material of your service line, contact the Acton Water District at (978) 263-9107 or WQ@actonwater.com to schedule an inspection.

(2) The Acton Water District Staff or its contractor may contact you to perform a service line material inspection, please utilize the **MassDEP Lead Service Line Identification Tool** presented in the QR codes below to send your service line information to the Acton Water District and to **learn more about Lead in Drinking Water**.

MassDEP Lead Service Line Identification Tool
<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/f9ee39b7972f443ca63e8b936cd7f92b>



US EPA Protect Your Tap Tool [Protect Your Tap: A Quick Check for Lead](#)



For more information on lead see the Acton Water District webpage at <https://www.actonwater.com/>
For MassDEP information on Lead in Drinking Water see <https://www.mass.gov/lead-in-drinking-water>

For more information, or if you have questions on how to verify the material of your service line, contact Katy at (978) 263-9107 or WQ@actonwater.com.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water at this address, 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.

This notice is being sent to you by the Acton Water District. PWS ID#: 2002000 Date distributed [date]

Distributed media type [insert type]

ACTON WATER DISTRICT DRINKING WATER NOTICE

Your home is served by a Galvanized Requiring Replacement service line and your service line may contain lead.

This notice contains important information about your drinking water. Have someone translate it for you or speak with someone who understands it.

Dear Customer,

Water systems are now required to document all water service line materials and identify any lead or lead containing materials. Our most recent inventory has determined that a portion of, or the entire, water pipe (called a service line) that connects your building to the water main is made from galvanized material and may have absorbed lead. EPA has defined these service lines as “**galvanized requiring replacement**”. This material is not made of lead but may have built up lead deposits over time due to an existing or previous upstream lead service line; it can be a source of lead in your drinking water.

The EPA has defined “Galvanized Requiring Replacement” to mean where a galvanized service line is or was at any time downstream of a lead service line or is currently downstream of a “Lead Status Unknown” service line. If the water system is unable to demonstrate that the galvanized service line was never downstream of a lead service line, it must presume there was an upstream lead service line.

Health effects of lead.

Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems.

Steps you can take to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water.

- **Run your water to flush out lead.** Lead levels increase over time as water sits in lead-containing plumbing materials. Before drinking or cooking with your water after it has sat overnight or longer, flush your home’s pipes by running water through the kitchen faucet, taking a shower, or doing any other non-consumptive water usage. Run the water for at least 1 minute or until after it turns cold. The amount of time to run the water will depend on whether your home has a lead service line or not, as well as the length and diameter of the service line and the amount of plumbing in your home.
- **Use only cold, fresh water for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula.** Run the water for at least 1 minute or until after it turns cold.
- **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water does not remove lead.
- **Clean your aerator.** Regularly clean your faucet’s screen (also known as an aerator). Sediment, debris, and lead particles can collect in your aerator. Lead particles can release lead into your water. See how to clean your aerator at [important-resources-for-safe-drinking-water.pdf \(epa.gov\)](#).
- **Use your filter properly, if you use a filter.** Filters can reduce lead in drinking water. Make sure it is certified by NSF to remove lead- it will say so on the package. Follow directions to properly install, use, and replace your filter. Do not run hot water through the filter. For more information, and which certifications to look for, visit EPA’s website at <https://www.epa.gov/water-research/consumer-tool-identifying-point-use-and-pitcher-filters-certified-reduce-lead>.
- **Identify and replace plumbing fixtures** containing lead and any copper piping with lead solder.
- **Have your child’s blood tested for lead.** Children are a higher risk group of the health effects of lead. If you would like to have your child tested, you may contact your health care provider, or local state health

department here: **Acton Health Department (978) 929-6632** or **Massachusetts Department of Public Health (617) 624-6000**

- **Have your water tested for lead. You cannot see, taste or smell lead in drinking water.** Contact our system for more information about lead in your drinking water and how to get your water tested by a state certified laboratory. See the list of labs here: [Certified Laboratory Search Results](https://www.mass.gov/certified-laboratory-search-results) (<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-certified-laboratory-for-water-testing>).

Opportunities to Replace Galvanized Requiring Replacement Service Lines

Acton Water District has developed/is developing a Lead Service Line Replacement Program with the goal of removing all the lead and galvanized requiring replacement service lines in the water system. Consumers may view the Acton Water District Service Line Replacement Plan at this website: <https://www.actonwater.com/>

*The Acton Water District intends to replace the portion of the service line under District ownership; while replacing this line, **we offer to replace the homeowner's portion of the service line without cost to the customer.** If you as the homeowner choose not to have us replace your portion of the service line, you may experience a temporary increase in lead levels in your drinking water; we strongly recommend having us replace your portion of the service line when The Acton Water District replaces the service line portion under District ownership.*

If you are planning on replacing the portion of the service line that you own, please notify us at (978) 263 9107 or WQ@actonwater.com.

For MassDEP information on Lead in Drinking Water see <https://www.mass.gov/lead-in-drinking-water>

Please notify The Acton Water District if you disagree with the service line material categorization in our service line inventory, using the contact information below.

For more information, contact Katy Orciuch at (978) 263-9107 or WQ@actonwater.com

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water at this address, 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.

This notice is being sent to you by Acton Water District PWS ID#: 2002000 Date distributed [date]

Distributed media type [insert type]



SUPERFUND

W.R. Grace & Co. (Acton Plant) Superfund Site Acton and Concord, MA



THE SUPERFUND PROGRAM protects human health and the environment by investigating and cleaning up often-abandoned hazardous waste sites and engaging communities throughout the process. Many of these sites are complex and need long-term cleanup actions. Those responsible for contamination are held liable for cleanup costs. EPA strives to return previously contaminated land and groundwater to productive use.

UPCOMING OPEN HOUSE

Please join us for an Open House event, where residents and community members can learn about the history of the Site, current activities occurring on site and get to know members of the Site Team, including EPA's Remedial Project Manager, Community Involvement Coordinator, and representatives from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and W.R. Grace & Co.

Tuesday, November 12, 2024

6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

Acton Town Hall, 472 Main St, Acton, MA 01720
Faulkner Room (Room 204)

BACKGROUND

The W.R. Grace & Co. (Acton Plant) Superfund Site (Grace Site) is located in the towns of Acton and Concord, Massachusetts and has been used for industrial purposes since the 1800s. The Grace Site is comprised of approximately 1,110 acres of land in both towns and includes several surface water bodies and wetlands. The Site includes approximately 180 acres of property currently owned by W.R. Grace & Co. (Grace) and 80 acres of land formerly owned by Grace, now owned by the town of Concord. Grace acquired the property in 1954 and produced materials used to make concrete additives, organic chemicals, container sealing compounds, latex products, and paper and plastic battery separators. Discharged wastes from these operations flowed into several unlined lagoons and were placed or buried in the on-site Industrial Landfill and several other waste sites. These site-related activities resulted in the contamination of soil, sediment, and groundwater. In 1980, discharges to the on-site lagoons and on-site disposal ceased at the Grace facility. The Site was listed on the National Priorities List (NPL) in 1983.

KEY CONTACTS:

KARA NIERENBERG

U.S. EPA
Project Manager
617-918-1435
nierenberg.kara@epa.gov

BRENDA MURCIA

U.S. EPA
Community Involvement
Coordinator
617-918-1186
murcia.brenda@epa.gov

JEN MCWEENEY

Massachusetts Dept. of
Environmental Protection
Project Manager
jennifer.mcweaney@mass.gov

GENERAL INFO:

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1-888-EPA-7341

LEARN MORE AT:

[www.epa.gov/superfund/
graceacton](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/graceacton)

continued >>



IS THE DRINKING WATER SAFE?

Yes. The Acton Water District continues to closely monitor, sample, and treat the town's drinking water to ensure that safe drinking water standards are maintained, and to ensure that clean drinking water continues to be provided to all residents. The EPA, MassDEP, and Acton Water District will continue to provide oversight at the Site while the groundwater remedy is in progress. EPA is monitoring the extent of the contaminated groundwater plume, which is not migrating to the public water supply. Originally in 2002 and reinstated in 2023, the Acton Board of Health placed an administrative hold on all proposed wells within 500 feet of the contaminated groundwater plume. Similarly, in 2024 the Concord Board of Health approved regulations that prohibit wells within 500 feet of the groundwater plume.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE TO CLEAN UP THE SITE?

Contamination at the Site has been addressed through federal, state and Grace's actions. The first phase of the long-term cleanup included the excavation and disposal of contaminants in the Site's lagoon/disposal areas, treatment (as needed), and the placement and capping of contaminated soils and sludges in the former Industrial Landfill at the Site. The second phase of the cleanup addressed on-site and off-site contaminated groundwater, surface water, sediments, and wetlands. Sediment cleanup at Sinking Pond and the North Lagoon Wetlands has been completed. The wetlands areas that were disturbed by the cleanup activities were replanted and restored.



A groundwater treatment system, referred to as the Aquifer Restoration System (ARS) was installed in 1983 on the southern area of the site. The system pumped contaminated groundwater and removed volatile organic compound (VOC) contaminants, then discharged treated water to Sinking Pond. The 2005 cleanup plan required groundwater extraction from different locations to be more effective and required additional groundwater treatment to remove metals (inorganics) before discharging the treated water to Sinking Pond. The original 1983 Aquifer Restoration System was replaced with a new Landfill Area Treatment System in 2012.

Much of the groundwater on the Site is being addressed by monitored natural attenuation (MNA). Monitored natural attenuation relies on natural processes to decrease or "attenuate" concentrations of contaminants in soil and groundwater. Scientists monitor these conditions to make sure natural attenuation is working. Monitoring typically involves collecting soil and groundwater samples to analyze them for the presence of contaminants and other site characteristics.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITE STATUS?

Planned soil and sediment work in the former disposal areas at the Site is complete. Groundwater contamination has been greatly reduced across the Site through the operation of multiple groundwater extraction and treatment systems. The remaining

continued >>

groundwater contamination is being addressed through a combination of monitored natural attenuation (MNA), and operation of the Landfill Area Treatment System, which extracts and treats contaminated groundwater downgradient of the former industrial landfill. Site groundwater is sampled annually to monitor the progress of the groundwater remedy. Water levels and sediment conditions are also monitored in Sinking Pond to assess the protectiveness of the sediment remedy in the pond.

FIVE-YEAR REVIEW SUMMARY

On June 13, 2024, the EPA completed the sixth Five-Year Review report for the Site. The purpose of the Five-Year Review is to determine if remedies at a site remain protective of human health and the environment. If any issues that may affect protectiveness are found during the five-year review, recommendations are made to address them. The first Five-Year Review was completed in 1999.

The sixth Five-Year Review can be found on the Grace Site profile page at www.epa.gov/superfund/graceacton. The review found the Site to be "short-term protective", which means that the site remedies are currently protective, but actions are needed to ensure long-term protectiveness. To ensure the remedy remains protective in the long-term, EPA identified several issues to focus on moving forward, including:

- consider an institutional control to require soil characterization or a soil management plan prior to redevelopment to ensure site-related contamination is not present in uncharacterized soils;
- properly abandon the groundwater extraction well installed by the town of Concord at their bus facility (Note, this work was completed by the town of Concord on June 19, 2024);
- continue investigating the increasing concentrations of VOCs observed in the OSA-13 well cluster area, and identify the source of that contamination; and
- add sampling and analysis for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) into the groundwater monitoring program.

EPA will work with MassDEP, the Town of Acton, the Town of Concord, and Grace to address these issues prior to the next five-year review, which is due in June 2028.

SITE REDEVELOPMENT

Grace ended manufacturing operations at the Acton property and does not intend to move operations back to the property. As the Site cleanup continues, multiple reuse options are being evaluated for the parcels owned by Grace.

In 2015, the town of Concord took ownership of the parcel of the Grace property located in Concord by eminent domain. The 80-acre parcel is located between the Assabet River to the east and the Concord/Acton Town border to the west. Concord constructed a solar array on the northern part of this property and a bus maintenance facility on the southern part.

A new 5-megawatt solar array is expected to be installed on the Grace property in 2024–2025. The array will be located south of the MBTA commuter rail line and north of the Industrial Landfill. A figure is included at the end of this fact sheet showing the layout of the Acton solar facility. Grace and the town of Acton are also actively looking into reuse opportunities for the Site, including the potential for residential use on parts of the Site.

NEXT STEPS

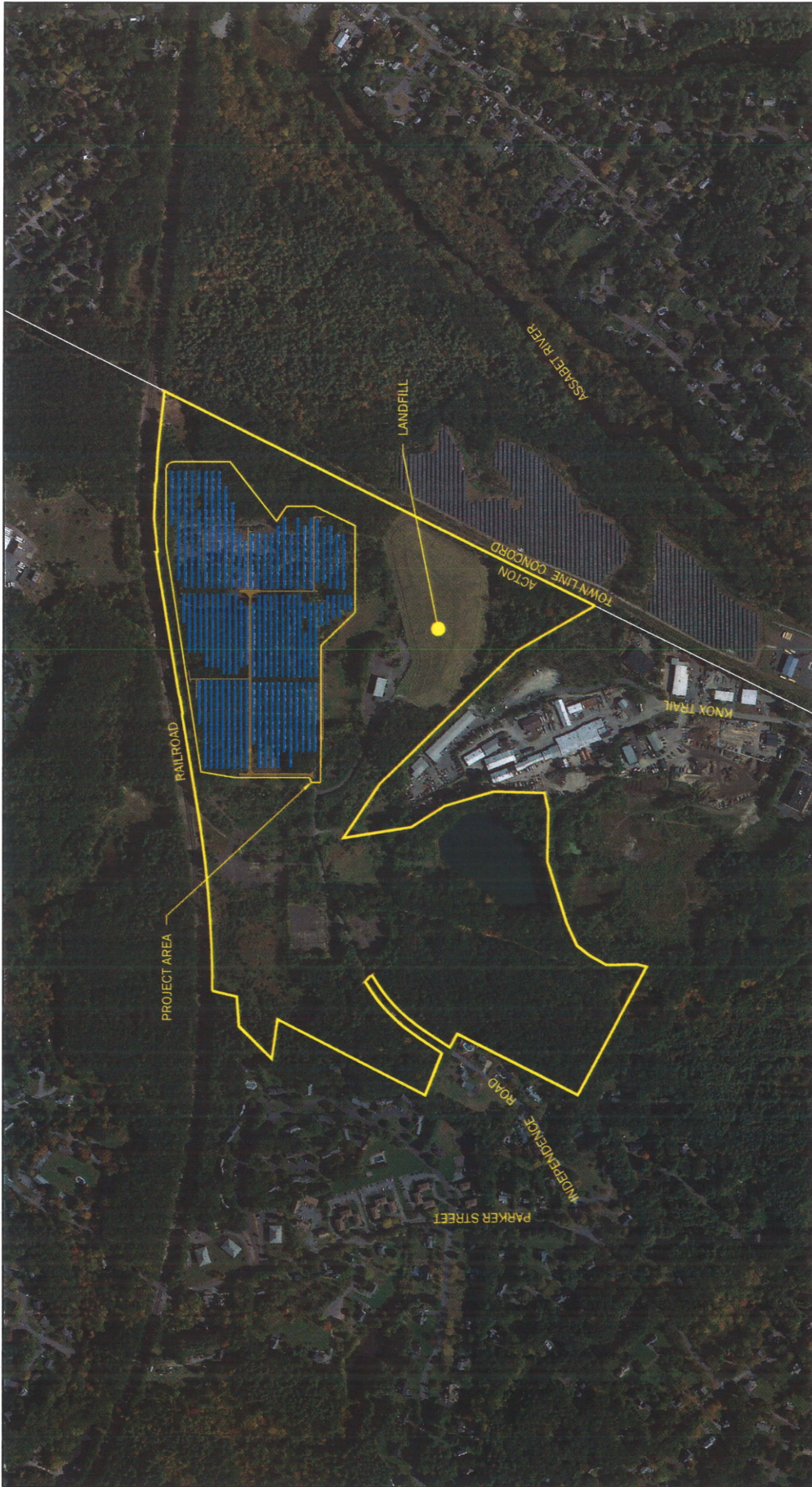
EPA and MassDEP will continue to oversee all Superfund related operations, including treatment plant maintenance and groundwater sampling, at the Site. Grace will continue to operate the Landfill Area Treatment System, monitor the groundwater remedy, maintain the landfill, and generally manage the Grace owned parcels. Grace is continually looking for opportunities to redevelop portions of the Site to bring the property back into productive reuse.

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Site Detail Map
 W.R. Grace & Co. (Acton Plant) Superfund Site
 Towns of Acton and Concord, Middlesex County, Massachusetts

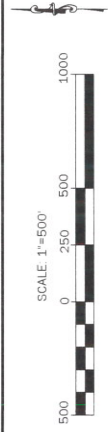
FIGURE 1



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**Syncarpha Acton
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 Independence Road
 Acton, MA



Sheet Title:
**Economic
 Profile Sketch**

Sheet No:
SK.1
 Date:
 May 8, 2024

