

Safe Drinking Water Program

DEP's Bureau of Safe Drinking Water is responsible for managing the federally delegated drinking water program and because we have primary enforcement authority (primacy), DEP implements both the federal and state Safe Drinking Water Acts and associated regulations. To control impacts to water, the Safe Drinking Water Program: protects all Pennsylvania residents and visitors from microbiological, chemical and radiological contaminants in drinking water served at nearly 8,400 public water systems; conducts surveillance, compliance, enforcement and permitting activities at public water systems to ensure compliance with safe drinking water standards; protects Pennsylvania's drinking water sources through proper planning and management of water resources and their uses; responds to water supply emergencies, such as floods, droughts, chemical spills or waterborne disease outbreaks; and maintains a web-based reporting application to allow accredited laboratories and public water suppliers to report drinking water sample results electronically. The bureau also trains and certifies drinking water and wastewater operators for over 10,000 treatment plants.

In June 2021, the Safe Drinking Water Program produced the 'Pennsylvania Public Water System Annual Compliance Report' for the 2020 calendar year. According to this report, 678 sanitary surveys (full inspections) were completed in 2020, and 10,458 compliance notices and notices of violations were issued. An overview of the program's most recent statistics is provided in Table 1, and within DEP's [2020 Annual Compliance Report](#).

Table 1. Overview of the Safe Drinking Water Program's compliance actions according to the latest report (2020).

Compliance Notices and Notices of Violations	10,458
Consent and Administrative Orders	597
Consent Assessments	32
Boil Water advisories (Community Systems)	56
Boil Water advisories (Noncommunity Systems)	45
Civil Penalties Collected	\$90,639

DEP's [2018 Disinfection Requirements Rule](#) (DRR) strengthens the requirements intended to guard against microbial contamination by ensuring the adequacy of treatment designed to inactivate microbial pathogens and ensuring the integrity of drinking water distribution systems. Public water suppliers treating surface water or GUDI sources must demonstrate compliance with existing log inactivation requirements by routinely reporting the level of disinfection being achieved. Additionally, public water systems required to provide disinfection are now required to maintain a specified minimum disinfectant residual throughout the distribution system; water suppliers are required to conduct an investigation at locations with low residual levels to identify the cause and appropriate corrective actions. More information about Safe Drinking Water Program updates can be found in the latest edition of DEP's [Drinking Water News](#).

DEP's [2018 General Update and Fees Rule](#) (GUFR) establishes the regulatory basis for issuing general permits, clarifies that noncommunity water systems (NCWS) require a

permit or approval from DEP prior to construction and operation, and addresses concerns regarding gaps in the monitoring, reporting and tracking of back-up sources of supply. This rule also amends existing permit fees and adds a new annual fee to supplement Commonwealth costs to ensure that DEP has adequate funding to enforce the applicable drinking water laws, meet state and federal minimum program elements, and retain primacy (primary enforcement authority). The new annual fee became effective CY 2019.