



**The MassINC Polling Group**  
**RCAP Solutions and Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts- Water Quality Poll**  
Survey of 1,013 Massachusetts residents  
Field dates: August 7 -16, 2023

First off, where does your home get its tap water from?

The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA)	23%
Another regional water system	3%
Your municipality or community's public water system	47%
A private well	9%
Don't know / refused	18%

**IF PRIVATE WELL ASK NEXT. OTHERWISE SKIP.**

When was the last time the water from your private well was tested for quality and safety?

Within the last 6 months	12%
6 months to a year ago	9%
1-5 years ago	37%
More than 5 years ago	17%
I'm not sure when it was last tested	21%
Don't know / refused	3%

When you're at home, do you generally drink water straight from the tap, drink filtered tap water, or do you drink bottled water?

Drink straight from the tap	24%
Drink filtered tap water	34%
Drink bottled water	42%
Don't know / refused	1%

How would you rate the quality of the tap water in your home?

Excellent	14%
Very good	27%
Good	29%
Fair	19%
Poor	8%
Don't know / refused	3%

And overall, how would you rate the quality of tap water in Massachusetts?

Excellent	8%
Very good	23%
Good	35%
Fair	22%
Poor	6%
Don't know / refused	7%

What, if anything, have you heard about drinking water quality or contaminated drinking water in the news over the past few months? **OPEN-ENDED.**

Nothing	63%
Bad / unsafe water quality / color / taste	8%
Contaminated drinking water	7%
Other chemicals / toxins / bacteria / microplastics	6%
News about other locations	4%
PFAS / Forever chemicals	4%
Good / safe water quality	3%
Environmental emergencies / rain	3%
Boil order	2%
Lead	2%
Contaminated beaches	2%
Old pipes	1%
Fluoride	1%
Health effects	1%
Garbage / sewage in water	1%
Other	6%

How concerned, if at all, are you about the presence of each of the following in drinking water in Massachusetts?

	Very concerned	A little concerned	Not too concerned	Not concerned at all	Don't know / refused
<b>ROTATE ORDER</b>					
PFAS, sometimes called "forever chemicals"	39%	31%	18%	6%	7%
Lead	39%	29%	20%	7%	4%
Nitrate	22%	30%	26%	10%	12%
Bacteria, including e-coli	43%	31%	17%	7%	3%
Radon	24%	28%	24%	11%	12%
Arsenic	33%	25%	23%	12%	7%
Uranium	27%	25%	22%	15%	11%

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know / refused
<b>ROTATE ORDER</b>					
Every Massachusetts resident should have access to safe drinking water	88%	9%	1%	1%	1%
State government should have a role in ensuring that all residents have safe drinking water	70%	22%	5%	1%	2%
I worry about whether my drinking water is safe to drink	25%	36%	23%	14%	2%
Right now, not everyone in Massachusetts has tap water that is safe to drink	26%	37%	14%	4%	19%
Private well owners should <b>not</b> be subject to different drinking water protections depending on what town they are in	24%	31%	17%	9%	19%
It should be up to private well owners to decide whether to test and treat their drinking water	21%	30%	23%	18%	8%

Right now, Massachusetts has statewide protections for public water systems across different regions and municipalities but not for private wells, which provide drinking water to approximately half a million residents in Massachusetts. Do you think that well water should be protected in the same way as other sources of drinking water in the state to ensure public health?

Yes	73%
No	8%
Don't know / refused	19%

Right now, the State Legislature is considering legislation that would enable the state Department of Environmental Protection to develop statewide protections for private wells as it does with other sources of drinking water. How much would you support or oppose this legislation?

Strongly support	35%
Somewhat support	39%
Somewhat oppose	10%
Strongly oppose	3%
Don't know / refused	13%

The proposed legislation would also provide financial assistance to help low-income private well owners address contamination in their wells using an existing state revolving loan fund. Knowing this, how much would you support or oppose legislation that would enable the state Department of Environmental Protection to develop minimum statewide protections for private wells, as it does with other sources of drinking water?

Strongly support	39%
Somewhat support	41%
Somewhat oppose	7%
Strongly oppose	3%
Don't know / refused	9%

Massachusetts requires that a home be tested for environmental risks, like radon gas or a leaking septic system, before it is sold to a new owner. How much would you support or oppose requiring homes with private wells have their water tested before they are sold?

Strongly support	57%
Somewhat support	30%
Somewhat oppose	5%
Strongly oppose	3%
Don't know / refused	5%

**Thank you! These last few questions are for statistical purposes, to help us compare your answers to others.**

**ASK IF ON PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM**

How much would you estimate that you pay on your water bill every year? **OPEN ENDED.**

\$1-\$500	33%
\$501-\$1000	21%
\$1001+	25%
Rent / HOA	13%
Other	1%
Don't know / N/A	6%

**ASK IF PRIVATE WELL**

In the past year, how much would you estimate you paid to test and maintain your private well? **OPEN ENDED.**

\$0	51%
\$1-\$500	28%
\$501+	10%
Have not tested	2%
Rent / HOA	5%
Other	4%
Don't know	3%

**Demographics:**

Gender:

Men	48%
Women	51%
Some other way	1%
Don't know / refused	<1%

Age:

18-29	22%
30-44	24%
45-59	25%
60+	29%

Race:

White	71%
Black	7%
Latino	11%
Asian	7%
Other / multiple	3%
Don't know / refused	1%

Party ID:

Democrat	34%
Republican	14%
Independent / Other	47%
Don't know / refused	5%

Education

High School or less	32%
Some college, no degree	26%
College graduate (BA/BS)	24%
Advanced degree	18%
Don't know / refused	1%

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**About the poll**

These results are based on a survey of 1,013 residents of Massachusetts. Responses were collected online August 7-16, 2023 in English and Spanish. Results were weighted to known and estimated population parameters on age, gender, race, party identification, education, and geography. The credibility interval is +/- 3.4 percentage points for the entire sample, including the design effect. This poll was sponsored by the Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts.