



July 6, 2023

## **Important Information about Drinking Water Improvements in West Boxborough and Associated Costs to Water Customers**

***The Boxborough Town Administrator provides this notice on behalf of the Littleton Electric Light and Water Department***

Dear Boxborough Property Owner and/or Resident:

This letter is for property owners and residents on the route of a planned water line to serve the western side of Boxborough on Beaver Brook Road, Swanson Road, and Codman Hill Road as far south as 330 Codman Hill Road.

Testing of the drinking water in this area has detected per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) at levels exceeding the Massachusetts Drinking Water Standards.

Long-term consumption of PFAS poses significant health risks. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, which regulates 11 small public water systems serving multi-family housing and businesses in this area, has required the systems to take corrective actions to provide safe drinking water to the impacted residents and users.

In addition, elevated sodium and chloride concentrations have been detected in some of the water supplies in West Boxborough. Although not considered primary contaminants, sodium in excess of MassDEP's guideline of 20 milligrams per liter (mg/L) may have adverse health effects, especially for people on low-sodium diets. Chloride exceeding the secondary maximum contaminant level of 250 mg/L may have aesthetic impacts on the drinking water.

A planned water main project would provide safe, reliable drinking water. It will impact Boxborough property owners and residents along the route. It is important that you understand those impacts.

**A virtual forum for Boxborough property owners and residents is planned for July 26, 2023 at 6:30 pm. Please go to <https://www.lelwd.com/forums> to register.**

Working with the MassDEP, MassDOT, the Boxborough Board of Selectmen, the Boxborough Water Resources Committee, the impacted homeowners' associations and other partners, the Littleton Electric Light and Water Department (LELWD) has put forward a plan to provide clean reliable water to this area of Boxborough. LELWD plans to run 4.5 miles of water main from the new Whitcomb Avenue water treatment plant in Littleton to serve the impacted properties in Boxborough.

Littleton Town Meeting approved the project on May 1, 2023. The Boxborough Board of Selectmen previously endorsed the project in letters to LELWD (July 12, 2022) and MassDEP (September 2, 2022). Littleton and Boxborough have recently agreed and signed an intermunicipal agreement (IMA) to enable LELWD to provide water service to the impacted section of Boxborough. The towns will also seek the passage of necessary state legislation to further strengthen the agreement.

The estimated cost of the project is \$13 million. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) has agreed to contribute \$6.5 million. MassDOT has determined that its nearby snow and ice operations have likely contributed to the elevated salt concentrations in some of the water systems. Other sources of salt include salting private drives and parking lots, town roads and treatment for finished water. The balance of the project cost would be paid for by betterment fees assessed on properties along the water main route through Boxborough, regardless of whether the properties connect to the new public water source. The amount of the betterment will depend on each property's current water usage and the ultimate cost of construction.

As a PFAS-remediation project, it qualifies for a zero-percent interest loan from the state's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund.

Betterment fees are charged by public utilities to properties that are bettered by infrastructure improvements. A water main that offers clean, reliable water to a property is considered a betterment. Betterments are not to be confused with connection fees, which are charged when a water line connects the system to a building. Betterments are paid in installments over the length of the loan, which could be 20 or 30 years.

As part of the project, LELWD will develop a new drinking water well on Taylor Street in Littleton. The new well will increase the supplies for the entire LELWD system by about a half million gallons per day. An estimated 15% of the new well water will be delivered to Boxborough. The cost of developing the new well will be paid proportionally and fairly by Littleton and Boxborough water customers.

We encourage you to attend the virtual forum on July 26, 2023, at 6:30 pm for additional information on estimated betterments charges and connection fees. Registered attendees will have an opportunity to ask questions. Please go to <https://www.lelwd.com/forums> to register.

Sincerely,



Corey Godfrey  
Water & Sewer Superintendent  
Littleton Electric Light & Water  
Departments



Michael C. Johns  
Boxborough Town Administrator