



Massachusetts
Department
of
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

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ADA Coordinator at
(617) 574-6872.

fact sheet

How Can I Protect Drinking Water Sources?

Boards of Health Protect Drinking Water

Hazardous Materials

- ✓ If the town has hazardous materials regulations, ensure that all appropriate businesses register with the BoH, and inspect for compliance with storage, labeling, and other requirements.
- ✓ Educate businesses on Best Management Practices (BMPs) for proper hazardous material handling, storage, and disposal. Examples include secondary storage and spill kits for spills and other emergencies.
- ✓ If a business is currently an unregistered generator of hazardous waste or waste oil, help it to register with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Refer to the Requirements for Small Quantity Hazardous Waste Generators at: mass.gov/dep/bwp/dhm/files/sqgsum.pdf.
- ✓ Work with emergency response personnel to ensure that emergency response plans are up to date and include all hazardous materials registered in town.

Floor Drains

Floor drains connected to dry wells or septic systems provide a route directly to groundwater if leaks or spills occur. In some cases floor drains may discharge to storm sewers or directly to surface waters.

- ✓ Floor drains in areas where hazardous materials or wastes are stored must drain to a tight tank, be sealed, or be connected to a municipal sanitary sewer. See also mass.gov/dep/brp/dws/files/uic.pdf for more information.
- ✓ Investigate where floor drains flow. If floor drains do not flow to a tight tank or municipal sewer, refer business owners to DEP for information on how to comply with DEP requirements. Refer to mass.gov/dep/brp/dws/dwspubs.htm#uic.

Septic Systems

- ✓ Educate property owners about the importance of locating, inspecting, and maintaining septic system components regularly to ensure a working septic system. A brochure for homeowners is available at: mass.gov/dep/brp/files/yoursyst.htm.
- ✓ Work with businesses and homeowners to ensure that they never dispose of any hazardous materials such as cleaners, paints, or oil to a septic system.

Local Controls

- ✓ If the town doesn't have hazardous materials controls, enact a regulation for the protection of public health. A community guide to hazardous materials management is available at: mass.gov/dep/brp/dws/files/hazmat.doc
- ✓ Support the implementation of a local floor drain regulation if it is not already part of the wellhead protection controls in town. A sample regulation is available at: mass.gov/dep/brp/dws/files/fdrmod.pdf
- ✓ Boards of Health can protect drinking water sources through local controls that meet DEP's drinking water regulations 310CMR 22.21. Work with public water systems in town and other local officials to create and implement these controls. More information is available at: mass.gov/dep/brp/dws/protect.htm.