



The Town of Barnstable

Office of Town Manager

367 Main Street, Hyannis, MA 02601

Office: 508.862.4610

Fax: 508.790.6226

www.townofbarnstable.us

Citizens' Resource Line: 508.862.4925

Mark S. Ells, Town Manager

mark.ells@town.barnstable.ma.us

M. Andrew Clyburn, Assistant Town Manager

andy.clyburn@town.barnstable.ma.us

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Commissioner Robbie Goldstein
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Commissioner Goldstein,

On behalf of the Town of Barnstable, I am writing to formally acknowledge and communicate the historic and ongoing presence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the groundwater resources within the Town's boundaries, as well as the public health and environmental impacts resulting from this contamination.

Multiple investigations, dating back more than a decade, have confirmed the presence of PFAS compounds in groundwater in Barnstable. Notably, significant PFAS detections have been associated with historical activities at and around the Barnstable County Fire and Rescue Training Academy and the Barnstable Municipal Airport.

The contamination has led to:

- **Implementation of emergency and long-term water treatment solutions**, including granular activated carbon (GAC) filtration to ensure safe drinking water delivery to residents.
- **Increased financial burden on the Town and its ratepayers**, associated with water treatment infrastructure upgrades, PFAS testing, monitoring, and public outreach.
- **Public health concerns**, particularly related to potential long-term exposure to PFAS through drinking water which have prompted ongoing community engagement.

The Town continues to monitor groundwater and drinking water systems for PFAS and remains committed to protecting public health, securing funding for treatment, and holding responsible parties accountable.

We respectfully request that the Department of Public Health continue to support our efforts to understand and address the health implications of PFAS exposure in Barnstable and consider the Town's historical PFAS burden in any relevant public health research, funding, or policy initiatives moving forward.

My specific requests are that the Massachusetts Department of Public Health take additional proactive steps to address the growing public health concerns related to per-

and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). As you are aware, PFAS are persistent environmental contaminants that have been linked to a range of adverse health outcomes, including certain cancers, developmental disorders, immune system effects, and thyroid dysfunction.

Given the widespread exposure to PFAS in drinking water, consumer products, and the environment, I urge the Department to initiate an effort to educate health care providers and insurers in the Commonwealth about the risks associated with PFAS, as well as the clinical and public health importance of addressing these risks in medical settings.

Specifically, I request the Department to consider the following actions:

1. **Provider Education:** Develop and disseminate educational materials and clinical guidelines to physicians, nurses, and other medical professionals on the health impacts of PFAS, screening and diagnosis protocols, and best practices for patient communication.
2. **Support for Research:** Advocate for and support medical and public health research on PFAS exposure and its health consequences. Such research is critical to better understand the long-term effects and to inform evidence-based approaches to diagnosis and treatment.
3. **Medical Expense Eligibility:** Work with relevant state agencies and insurers to recognize PFAS testing and treatment as eligible and necessary medical expenses. This includes ensuring insurance coverage for blood testing and other diagnostic measures, as well as treatment or mitigation strategies where indicated.

The residents of Barnstable and Massachusetts deserve access to the information, services, and support they need to protect themselves and their families from the dangers posed by PFAS. The Department's leadership in this matter would reinforce the clear message that the Commonwealth is committed to public health, environmental justice, and the well-being of all communities.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. I welcome the opportunity to support or engage further in these efforts in any way that may be helpful.

Respectfully,



Mark S. Ellis
Barnstable Town Manager

cc. Senator Julian Cyr ([by electronic mail only](mailto:julian.cyr@masenate.gov)) julian.cyr@masenate.gov
Representative Kip A. Diggs ([by electronic mail only](mailto:Kip.Diggs@mahouse.gov)) Kip.Diggs@mahouse.gov
Representative Steven Xiarhos ([by electronic mail only](mailto:Steven.Xiarhos@mahouse.gov))
Steven.Xiarhos@mahouse.gov
Craig Tamash, President Barnstable Town Council
Karen Nober, Barnstable Town Attorney