

Water Safety and Discoloration

DPW Superintendent Jamie Callahan (a licensed MA water distributor who came to Hinsdale from the Dalton Water Department) explained that discolored water is rarely a safety concern. The concern comes when the discoloration comes from dangerous bacteria (i.e., coliform bacteria; E. coli; enterococci), which Hinsdale's water is tested for regularly in accordance with EPA/MA-DEP Water Quality Standards. EPA/MA-DEP Standards state discoloration is considered a "secondary standard" and states:

Color and Turbidity – Waters shall be free from color and turbidity in concentrations or combinations that are *aesthetically objectionable or would impair* any use assigned to this class.

For further information about water and discoloration, please read the article posted by the US Geological Survey, which explains water discoloration and its typical causes. The link is available below.

Jamie contacted our Testing Agent at Howard Labs in Hatfield, where Hinsdale's water is regularly tested. The Agent explained that Hinsdale's water, from the most recent test, was fine, as it has been since the manganese issue due to a build-up in a pump two or so years ago. When the Town replaced that pump, the manganese level returned to a level acceptable by the EPA/MA-DEP. The most recent report, dated 9/9/2022, is shared via the link below.

Hinsdale's samples are collected regularly and delivered to the lab for testing. The Water Operator and MA-DEP receive copies of the results per the regulations. If something is not acceptable, we are required to alert the public and follow rectification and retesting protocols.

Finally, here are some links to additional information on Water Quality Standards and Discoloration:

- For more information on the Mass Standards, see [Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards \(epa.gov\)](https://www.epa.gov/mass-surface-water-quality-standards)
- For more info on the EPAs National Primary Drinking Water Regulations, see [National Primary Drinking Water Regulations | US EPA](https://www.epa.gov/national-primary-drinking-water-regulations)
- For information on Hinsdale's 9/9/2022 Howard Labs report, see: (attached below)
- For more information on water discoloration, see [Water Color | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](https://www.usgs.gov/water-color)

Thank you



FY23 - Howard Lab
Testing report 9.9.21