

## Water Quality Statement For Great Sand Lakes Sewer Project

The Harwich Water Department and the Board of Water and Wastewater Commissioners want to assure the residents that our public drinking water remains safe, high quality and well-protected. Providing excellent drinking water and safeguarding our water resources are not only long-standing priorities — they are the core mission of the Harwich Water Department.

At last week's select board meeting, a presentation was given in support of funding a sewer project, with one of the primary justifications being the protection of our drinking water supply. While wastewater management does play a role in maintaining water quality, it is important to provide accurate context regarding the current condition of our water supply and the effectiveness of the proposed sewer.

During the presentation, a Zone II recharge area map was displayed, correctly identifying the broader region that contributes to our wells over time. However, the proposed sewer location falls at the outermost limits of Zone II, meaning any potential impact on water quality would be significantly diluted or delayed. If nitrate levels near our wells were a concern,

a more logical approach would be to prioritize sewerage closer to the drinking water source rather than at its outer edges.

The proposed Great Sand Lakes sewer project is located upgradient from the Chatham Road and Depot Road well fields. Neither of these well fields detected nitrite in the most recent sampling round, and nitrate levels ranged from 0.11 ppm to 2.3 ppm, well below the maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 10 ppm for nitrate and 1 ppm for nitrite. These results confirm that our water supply remains within natural background levels, with no indication of human-caused contamination.

Sewer expansion should be considered as part of a comprehensive water resource strategy, one that balances environmental protection with effective infrastructure planning. Future decisionmaking should be based on sound science, targeted solutions, and a clear understanding of where sewerage will have the greatest impact. Residents should rest assured that our drinking water is continuously monitored and meets all state and federal safety standards. The Harwich Water Department remains committed to regular testing

and proactive management to ensure safe drinking water for all residents. On our web page you can find our Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) with all our sampling results.

We encourage the community to stay informed and engaged on these important issues.

*Jason Trepanier, Harwich Water and Wastewater Superintendent Noreen Donahue, Allin Thompson, Bob Young, Judith Underwood, John Gough Harwich Board of Water and Wastewater Commissioners*

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