



# NEWS

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## DEVENS INSTITUTES TEMPORARY PRIVATE WELL AND GROUNDWATER MORATORIUM

At its public meeting of February 28, 2023, the Devens Enterprise Commission (DEC), acting as the Board of Health for the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone, issued an order establishing a Temporary Moratorium on private wells and use of groundwater. “The DEC recognizes that certain areas of the groundwater aquifer beneath Devens have been or may become contaminated by Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other contaminants. Exposure to groundwater contaminated with PFAS and other contaminants through direct ingestion, dermal contact, inhalation by showering or washing, and irrigation may pose unacceptable public health risks to Devens’ residents and others. As an example, and not as a limitation, pumping or removing by any means ground water may result in spreading contaminated water onto sites where such wells or the withdrawal of ground water are in operation. Even using untreated groundwater for gardening and landscape watering presents a potential health risk.”

Fortunately, Devens Utilities has “installed water treatment technologies which treat municipal water to meet all state and federal regulations. Municipal water is available throughout the developed areas of Devens. All properties needing water within Devens are required to be connected to the Devens public water supply.” The moratorium applies to new or replacement wells. Devens Rules and Regulations also require and support a number of low-impact development strategies that reduce the need for utilization of groundwater for irrigation purposes and limit the need for treated municipal water for irrigation.

The Order was adopted by unanimous vote of the Commissioners present and goes into effect as of March 1, 2023 and will remain in effect until such time that the DEC determines that it is safe to use untreated groundwater again.

The full text of the temporary moratorium is available at: <https://www.devensec.com/news.html>

*The Devens Enterprise Commission is the regulatory and permitting authority for redevelopment of the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone. Its role is to administer and enforce the reuse plan, by-laws, regulations and sustainability vision within the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone.*