



PRESS RELEASE

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**RCAP SOLUTIONS LAUNCHING PRIVATE WELL PROGRAM TO ADDRESS
WELL ISSUES & CONTAMINATION IN NORTH CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS**

Worcester, MA - RCAP Solutions is launching the North Central Massachusetts Private Well Program to address drinking water issues in the Northern Central Massachusetts area. The program will include complimentary assessments and testing to identify contamination, provide public education, and work with local Boards of Health and other partners to promote better public health and safety for households with private wells through local and statewide regulations.

RCAP Solutions is seeking local homeowners with private wells who are interested in learning more about the quality of their water and the condition of their wells. Unlike public drinking water systems, private wells do not have experts regularly checking the water's source and its quality before it is sent to the tap. Households that use private wells should take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of their drinking water. Potential contaminants such as arsenic, radon, and uranium can have both short and long-term health impacts.

The RCAP staff will provide qualifying homeowners in the north central Massachusetts area with a free, on-site professional review of their well head and recharge area. The staff will adhere to strict social distancing practices to keep the homeowners safe during the coronavirus pandemic. The assessment will conclude with a complimentary water test from a state-certified lab, which otherwise can be a costly and time-consuming procedure. The water quality analysis will test for the following contaminants: Arsenic, Chloride, Copper, Fluoride, Hardness, Iron, Lead, Manganese, pH, Sodium, Coliform Bacteria, Nitrate/Nitrite, Radon, and Uranium. Interested homeowners can visit www.rcapsolutions.org/ma-private-wells for additional information.

The Central Massachusetts Private Well Program is a community partnership funded by a \$196,150 Synergy Initiative planning grant from The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts. The goal of the program this year is to assess a minimum of 20 private wells in the northern Worcester County area to determine the presence and location of water quality issues to inform the development of a pilot project in 2021 that will conduct additional private well water testing in the region. The second phase of this effort will include public education, advocacy for local and statewide private well regulations that better protect homeowners and communities, and identification of financial resources for homeowners needing well remediation.

“We are thrilled to continue our partnership with The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts in this important public health project,” stated Karen A. Koller, President & CEO of RCAP Solutions. “Because there are no state-wide regulations surrounding private well maintenance, it’s critical that homeowners in Central Massachusetts and across the state understand the importance of regular assessments and water testing. We are pleased to be able to fulfill our mission and meet the needs of rural communities by providing this valuable technical assistance to private well owners.”

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Dr. Jan Yost, President & CEO of The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, added, “Access to clean and safe drinking water free of harmful contaminants is essential to good health. The Foundation is pleased to support this important project that seeks to improve private well water quality through increased knowledge and enhanced local and statewide regulations to protect the public’s health.”

“Massachusetts continues to be at risk of dangerous substances like arsenic, radon, and uranium,” stated Congresswoman Lori Trahan. “They are a clear threat to our health and environment. It is time for Congress and the federal government to get serious about assisting municipalities in need of resources to respond to this public health concern. That’s what I’ve advocated for since coming to Congress, and it’s why I will always support grant funding that organizations like Resources for Community and People can use to improve our quality of life. RCAP Solutions has been doing exceptional work in this area, and I applaud their efforts.”

RCAP Solutions is working closely with the Montachusett Public Health Network and the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health to assist communities with promotional efforts and to ensure positive outcomes for homeowners. In addition, RCAP is collaborating with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and ongoing efforts to address per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in drinking water.

“The MassDEP Drinking Water Program is pleased to be collaborating with RCAP Solutions on this HFCM funded North Central Massachusetts Private Well Program,” stated Yvette DePeiza, MassDEP’s Drinking Water Program Director. “This project provides some critical resources to North Central Massachusetts health agents and private well owners within the project area towns, helping to ensure that these private sources of drinking water are safe and reliable.”

About RCAP Solutions, Inc.

RCAP Solutions is a thriving integrated community development corporation working with a multi-faceted suite of services and opportunities. Established in 1969, RCAP Solutions’ mission is to foster personal and public self-reliance and improve the quality of life for individuals, families, and the communities in which they live. For more information, please visit www.rcapsolutions.org.

About The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts

The Foundation was established in 1999 with the proceeds from the sale of Central Massachusetts Health Care, Inc., a physician-initiated, not-for-profit HMO. The Foundation currently has assets of approximately \$73 million and has awarded grants totaling approximately \$44 million to improve the health of those who live or work in Central Massachusetts. For further information about the Foundation’s grant programs, please visit The Health Foundation’s website at www.hfcm.org.

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