

# KENT COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY

## PFAS INFORMATION AND FACT SHEET

### APRIL 2024

- What is PFAS?**

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are an emerging contaminant of concern in groundwater throughout the United States. PFAS are man-made chemicals used to fight fires and in a variety of products and applications that are resistant to water, grease or stains, including nonstick cookware, carpets, upholstered furniture, clothing and food packaging. These chemicals are highly resistant to degradation in the environment and can mobilize into surface and groundwater from areas throughout the country that may have been contaminated for various reasons.

- Does the State of Rhode Island regulate PFAS in drinking water?**

The Rhode Island Legislature, working with the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), passed a law in June of 2022 to set an interim concentration standard for 6 PFAS chemicals of 20 parts per trillion (ppt). If sampling results show that a system shows PFAS levels at or below the 20 ppt interim standard, RIDOH requires that the water system sample for PFAS annually. If sampling results show PFAS levels exceeding the 20 ppt interim standard, RIDOH requires that the system sample quarterly. Systems that cannot provide water less than 20 ppt are required to find alternative water sources. The 6 PFAS chemicals regulated by the State of Rhode Island and the RIDOH are perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), perfluoroheptanoic acid (PFHpA) and perfluorodecanoic acid (PFDA).

*One part per trillion is equivalent to one drop in an Olympic sized swimming pool*

- Does the EPA regulate PFAS in drinking water?**

On April 10th, 2024, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced legally enforceable levels, called Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs), for six (6) PFAS chemicals. The EPA has set MCLs for both PFOA and PFOS at 4 ppt. PFHxS, PFNA and hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid (HFPO-DA, commonly known as GenX chemicals) have MCLs of 10 ppt. PFAS mixtures containing 2 or more of PFHxS, PFNA, HFPO-DA and perfluorobutane sulfonic acid (PFBS) have a Hazard Index MCL of 1. A Hazard Index (HI) MCL is used by the EPA to determine health concerns associated with exposure to chemical mixtures.

- Does the drinking water provided by the KCWA meet State and EPA regulations for PFAS?**

Sample results indicate that PFAS levels have been detected at levels below the 20 ppt State interim standard for PFAS at all KCWA Wells. However, PFAS was detected at levels exceeding the EPA MCL of 4 ppt for PFOA and PFOS chemicals at all KCWA Wells. Sampling for PFAS chemicals was performed in June of 2023 for all KCWA Wells including the East Greenwich Well, located off Post Road along the East Greenwich and Warwick city line, and Mishnock Wells #3, #4 and #5, located within the Mishnock Wellfield at the Mishnock Water Treatment Plant (WTP) off Nooseneck Hill Road in Coventry. Samples were also collected from treated water at the Mishnock WTP, which is a blend of water that is withdrawn from Mishnock Wells #3, #4 and #5, that flows through the treatment processes within the Mishnock WTP and is ultimately distributed to the public for consumption.

	Date Analyzed 6/23/23	East Greenwich Well Results	Mishnock Well #3 Results	Mishnock Well #4 Results	Mishnock Well #5 Results	Mishnock WTP Treated Water Results
RI PFAS 6	PFOS	2.22 ppt	3.13 ppt	4.73 ppt	4.46 ppt	1.96 ppt
	PFOA	8.96 ppt	4.89 ppt	8.58 ppt	1.67 ppt	6.42 ppt
	PFNA	< 1.00 ppt (ND)	< 1.00 ppt (ND)	< 1.00 ppt (ND)	< 1.00 ppt (ND)	< 1.00 ppt (ND)
	PFHxS	2.1 ppt	1.48 ppt	2.39 ppt	4.22 ppt	2.87 ppt
	PFHpA	4.08 ppt	2.23 ppt	3.79 ppt	1.53 ppt	3.27 ppt
	PFDA	< 1.00 ppt (ND)	< 1.00 (ND)	< 1.00 ppt (ND)	< 1.00 ppt (ND)	< 1.00 ppt (ND)
	PFAS 6 Sum	17.4 ppt	10.3 ppt	19.5 ppt	8.69 ppt	12.6 ppt
EPA HI	GenX	< 4.00 ppt (ND)	< 4.00 ppt (ND)	< 4.00 ppt (ND)	< 4.00 ppt (ND)	< 4.00 ppt (ND)
	PFBS	1.88 ppt	2.04 ppt	4.22 ppt	1.75 ppt	3.88 ppt
	PFNA	< 1.00 ppt (ND)	< 1.00 ppt (ND)	< 1.00 ppt (ND)	< 1.00 ppt (ND)	< 1.00 ppt (ND)
	PFHxS	2.1 ppt	1.46 ppt	2.39 ppt	4.22 ppt	2.87 ppt
	HI Calculation	0.21	0.41	0.24	0.42	0.29

ND = None Detected

- What is the KCWA doing to get the PFAS out of the drinking water?**

EPA regulations give public water systems until 2029 to implement treatment solutions to reduce PFAS chemicals in drinking water. In anticipation of the EPA PFAS regulations, KCWA began the process of designing a new treatment facility in East Greenwich that will include processes to reduce PFAS levels in water withdrawn from the East Greenwich Well. The design of the East Greenwich Treatment Facility will be completed in 2024. Modifications to the Mishnock WTP treatment processes to include treatment for PFAS in water withdrawn from Mishnock Wells #3, #4 and #5 will be made prior to the EPA's 2029 deadline. The primary objective of KCWA is to protect public health by providing reliable sources of drinking water that meet or exceed current drinking water regulations.

- Is my drinking water safe?**

In accordance with RIDOH PFAS regulations, public water systems with PFAS levels that have been detected above 70 ppt or more are required to advise people not to drink the water. Systems with PFAS levels lower than 70 ppt but greater than 20 ppt are required by the RIDOH to work to lower the PFAS levels in their drinking water. KCWA maintains PFAS levels below the State standard of 20 ppt however, PFAS levels exceed the 4 ppt MCL recently implemented by the EPA. KCWA is currently in compliance with both State and EPA PFAS regulations in that the water system's PFAS levels are below the 20 ppt State standard, and treatment processes to reduce PFAS levels will be in place for all of KCWA's groundwater sources by the EPA's 2029 deadline. If you are still concerned about the PFAS levels in your drinking water, filters can be purchased to treat PFAS in your home. The filters must be certified by the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) to remove PFAS and must be maintained often. Improperly maintained filters can cause the levels of PFAS in your home's drinking water to increase.