



BOROUGH OF ESSEX FELLS
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August 21, 2024

Dear Residents and Water Customers,

I am pleased to report that, as of July 16, 2024, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) is no longer detectable in the water that the Essex Fells Water System is supplying to customers in Essex Fells, Caldwell, North Caldwell and Roseland.

As you know from prior updates, in the last several years we have kept PFOA levels low, and within the NJ standard of 14 parts per trillion, by taking various temporary measures. At the same time, we have been actively pursuing our long-term goal of reducing levels of PFOA and other types of polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) to zero or as close to zero as current technology allows.

We have now achieved that goal in our active water supply, covering all 13 of the groundwater wells that we are currently using. To our knowledge, we are the first community water system in New Jersey to complete improvements on this scale to comprehensively remove PFOA contaminants to non-detectable levels. This also puts us well ahead of the new national standards for PFOA (4 parts per trillion) and 5 other types of PFAS, which were adopted in April 2024 but will not be fully effective until 5 years from now.

How has this been accomplished? What additional work is being done?

On July 15, 2024, we commenced operations at a new \$8.5 million PFOA treatment facility that we constructed at our main water treatment plant, which treats 13 of our water system's 16 groundwater wells. Test results confirm that PFOA and other types of PFAS are not detectable in the water leaving the plant.

On June 17, 2024, we awarded a contract for the construction of our second permanent PFOA treatment system, which will be installed at a water treatment plant that treats water from 2 wells. These wells are currently offline, not delivering water to the public. Thus, they have no current impact on water quality. However, installing permanent PFOA treatment will allow us to bring these 2 wells back online, which will increase our system's capacity while maintaining the water quality. We expect to complete this project by mid-2025.

Our third and final permanent PFOA facility will be constructed at a water treatment plant that treats 1 groundwater well. This well is currently offline. Design plans were filed with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection in June 2023. We hope to receive final approvals from the NJDEP and the NJ Water Bank in the next month or two, at which point we will advertise the project for bids. We expect to complete construction and return the well to service by the end of 2025. At that point, our water system will be back at full capacity, delivering water from 16 groundwater wells, with no detectable levels of PFOA.

Thank you for your patience as we complete these improvements.

Where You Can Find More Information

For more information, please see the August 21, 2024 regulatory notice issued by the Essex Fells Water Department, a copy of which is enclosed. The Water Department must distribute regulatory notices until permanent PFOA treatment systems are operating at all three of our treatment plants, including the two we are not currently using. These updates are meant to keep you informed about your drinking water and the capital improvements we are making in response to new regulations and the September 2021 PFOA exceedance previously reported to you.

Copies of prior Water Department updates and information on PFOA from the NJ Department of Health and the United States Environmental Protection Agency are available on the Borough's website (<https://www.essexfellsboro.com/pages/pfoa>).

Sincerely,

Edward A. Davis
Mayor
Borough of Essex Fells