

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER
ESSEX FELLS WATER SYSTEM

Update Regarding the Essex Fells Water System’s Violation of the New Jersey Safe Drinking Water Act; Permanent Treatment for Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) installed at TP001001 as of July 15, 2024 and PFOA is Non-Detectable in the Water Being Supplied

August 21, 2024

As you know, in the third quarter of 2021 our water system violated the New Jersey maximum contaminant level (MCL) for PFOA at three of our treatment plants – TP001001, TP002015, and TP003020. Additionally, as permanent PFOA was not completed at these treatment plants on or before August 17, 2022, our water system incurred an additional violation of the New Jersey Safe Drinking Water Act. As our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we have already done and are doing to correct this situation. To that end, the Essex Fells Water System has constructed and installed a permanent treatment facility at our main water treatment plant, TP001001, for removal of PFOA and other per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The new facility commenced operations on July 15, 2024, and is currently supplying water with PFOA concentrations at non-detectable levels.

With the commencement of permanent PFAS treatment at TP001001, the Essex Fells Water System has completed its planned remedial actions for PFOA at TP001001. TP001001 treats water from 13 of our 16 groundwater wells and is the only treatment plant currently delivering water to our customers. This important step means that the water being supplied to our customers now measures non-detectable levels of PFOA and sets up our system to resolve the MCL and one-year violations with respect to TP001001. Once we demonstrate, through analytical data, that the newly installed PFAS treatment at TP001001 maintains PFOA concentrations below the New Jersey MCL for two straight calendar quarters the MCL violation and one-year violation will be fully resolved.

Treatment plants TP003020 and TP002015, which together cover our remaining 3 wells, were shut down in September 2021 and remain offline, not delivering water to the public. Because these treatment plants remain offline, and thus no current PFOA results are available, the 2021 PFOA MCL violations will remain open until we complete our planned installation of permanent PFAS treatment systems at those locations. We expect that work to be completed in 2025. See “What is being done?” below for more information.

You were previously notified of the PFOA MCL violations in public notices issued every three months beginning September 16, 2021, with the most recent issued on April 18, 2024. Per the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act, we will continue to provide you with an updated public notice periodically until we complete all approved remedial measures and return our entire system to compliance with all State and Federal MCLs. The most recent public notice and updates regarding this matter are available at <https://www.essexfellsboro.com/pages/PFOA>.

The table below summarizes (1) the second and third quarter 2024 PFOA values based on our most recent compliance sampling, (2) the running annual average based on samples taken over the past 4 quarters that the treatment plants were in operation and (3) the current status of each treatment plant and each permanent treatment project.

For our main water treatment plant (TP001001), two test results are listed in the table. One sample was taken on June 21, 2024, *before* our permanent PFAS treatment facility began operating, and the results demonstrate that the water being distributed by TP001001 in June 2024 contained detectable levels of PFOA below New Jersey’s PFOA MCL. The second sample was taken on July 16, 2024, *after* our permanent PFAS treatment facility commenced operations, and the results confirm that PFOA is not detectable in the water currently being distributed.

PFOA levels for treatment plants TP003020 and TP002015 are shown as “N/A” in the table below because those plants are presently offline, not delivering water to the public and no current PFOA results are available. TP003020 and TP002015 remain included in the table because we are required to keep you informed of the status of any treatment plant with a PFOA MCL violation, even if it has been shut off and is no longer delivering water.

Treatment Plant (TP)	Most Recent Sample Collection Date	Second and Third Quarter 2024 PFOA Values	Running Annual Average	Current Status of Treatment Plants
TP001001	7-16-2024 6-21-2024	0.00 µg/L 0.0115 µg/L	0.00740µg/L 0.00964 µg/L	Online and in service. Permanent PFOA treatment facility in operation as of 7-15-2024 for 13 wells.
TP003020	N/A	N/A	N/A	Offline as of 9-24-2021. A contract for the construction of a PFOA treatment system at this treatment plant, which treats 2 wells, was awarded on 6-17-24. Subject to supply chain contingencies, the new facility is expected to be completed by mid- 2025, at which point this treatment plant and the 2 wells will be returned to service.
TP002015	N/A	N/A	N/A	Offline as of 9-24-2021. Design plans for the installation of a PFOA treatment system at this treatment plant, which treats 1 well, were submitted to the NJDEP in June 2023 and are awaiting final approvals. Subject to third party approvals, public contract bidding and supply chain contingencies, we hope to complete construction in 2025, at which point this treatment plant and the applicable well will be returned to service.

What is PFOA?

Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) is a member of the group of chemicals called per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), used as a processing aid in the manufacture of fluoropolymers used in non-stick cookware and other products, as well as other commercial and industrial uses, based on its resistance to harsh chemicals and high temperatures. PFOA has also been used in aqueous film-forming foams for firefighting and training, and it is found in consumer products such as stain-resistant coatings for upholstery and carpets, water-resistant outdoor clothing, and grease proof food packaging. Major sources of PFOA in drinking water include discharge from industrial facilities where it was made or used and the release of aqueous film-forming foam. Although the use of PFOA has decreased substantially, contamination is expected to continue indefinitely because it is extremely persistent in the environment and is soluble and mobile in water.

What does this mean?

**People who drink water containing PFOA in excess of the MCL over time could experience problems with their blood serum cholesterol levels, liver, kidney, immune system, or, in males, the reproductive system. Drinking water containing PFOA in excess of the MCL over time may also increase the risk of testicular and kidney cancer. For females, drinking water containing PFOA in excess of the MCL over time may cause developmental delays in a fetus and/or an infant. Some of these developmental effects may persist through childhood.*

* For specific health information, see https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/pfas_drinking%20water.pdf .

What should I do?

TP002015 and TP003020 are not currently in use, and the water being provided to consumers by TP001001 has non-detectable levels of PFOA. We will directly notify customers in writing prior to any planned use of TP002015 or TP003020 or will directly notify consumers within 24 hours of any emergency use of TP002015 or TP003020. Such notification will come through the water system's website, social media, and other methods. Anyone concerned about their health should consult with their personal healthcare provider.

For more information on the New Jersey state standards, see <https://www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/pdf/pfoa-pfos-faq.pdf> or <https://www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/pfas/>.

For additional information regarding PFOA from the federal government, including fact sheets and answers to frequently asked questions, please refer to the following resources from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): <https://www.epa.gov/pfas>.

What is being done?

As indicated above, Essex Fells has constructed a new permanent PFOA treatment facility for 13 wells at TP001001 and has shut down its other two treatment plants, TP003020 and TP002015.

With the commencement of permanent PFAS treatment, the Essex Fells Water System has completed its remediation of the 2021 MCL exceedance for PFOA at TP001001, which treats water from 13 of our 16 wells. This important step has also resolved the one-year violation that we received for not completing the permanent treatment facility at TP001001 within one year after the initial MCL exceedance.

A contract for the construction of a PFOA treatment system that will remove PFOA on a permanent basis at TP003020, which treats two (2) wells, was awarded on June 17, 2024. Subject to supply chain contingencies, the new facility is expected to be completed by mid- 2025, at which point this treatment plant and the two (2) wells will be returned to service.

Design plans for the installation of a PFOA treatment system at TP002015, which treats the water from one well, were submitted to the NJDEP in June 2023 and are awaiting final approvals. Subject to third party approvals, public contract bidding and supply chain contingencies, we hope to complete construction in 2025, at which point this treatment plant and the applicable well will be returned to service.

To view all the drinking water quality data collected by Essex Fells Water Department visit https://www9.state.nj.us/DEP_WaterWatch_public/index.jsp and enter NJ0706001 for the PWSID.

For more information, please contact William Ryden at 973-650-1029 or wryden@anderson-denzler.com. You may also contact the Essex Fells Water Department by mail at 318 Runnymede Road, Essex Fells, NJ 07021.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is being sent to you by Essex Fells Water Department, Water System ID#: NJ0706001.

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