

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; Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) continues to be Non-Detectable in the Water Being Supplied

May 21, 2025

As you know, in the third quarter of 2021 our water system violated the New Jersey maximum contaminant level (MCL) for Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) at three of our treatment plants – TP001001, TP002015, and TP003020. 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.

Specifically, on July 15, 2024 the Essex Fells Water System commenced operations of a permanent treatment facility at our main water treatment plant, TP001001, for removal of PFOA and other per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) from 13 of our 16 wells. TP001001 is the only water treatment plant currently delivering water to the public. As a result, PFOA is non-detectable in the water being supplied by the Essex Fells Water System.

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 for PFOA levels of 0.022 µg/l and 0.016 µg/l (respectively) – which were above the New Jersey PFOA MCL of 0.014 µg/l - 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 mailed every three months beginning September 16, 2021, with the most recent issued on February 21, 2025. Regarding subsequent public notices, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection approved our request to reduce the frequency of public notice mailings from every three months to every 12 months. The most recent public notice and updates regarding this matter are available at <https://www.essexfellsboro.com/pages/PFOA>. The public notice will be posted continuously on the website and will be updated every three months with information on PFOA levels and the status of the new treatment facilities being installed at TP003020 and TP002015. The next printed version of the public notice will be mailed to you in November 2025. Please contact the Essex Fells Water Department by mail at 318 Runnymede Road, Essex Fells, NJ 07021, or call 973-226-3400 if you wish to receive direct delivery of this three-month update notice.

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 via mail 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 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.

Construction of a PFOA treatment system that will remove PFOA on a permanent basis at TP002015, which treats 2 wells, is presently underway. We expect construction to be completed within the next several weeks, at which point this treatment plant and the 2 wells will be returned to service.

We have also commenced construction of a PFOA treatment system that will remove PFOA on a permanent basis at TP003020, which treats the water from 1 well. We expect this project to be completed by the end of 2025, at which point this treatment plant and the associated 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 provided by the Essex Fells Water Department, Water System ID#: NJ0706001.

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