

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER**

### **PFOA MCL Exceedance at Pequenakonck Elementary School**

#### **Why are you receiving this notice/information?**

You are receiving this notice because testing of our public water system found the chemical perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) in your drinking water at 107.5ppt. This is considerably above New York State's maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 10 ppt for PFOA in public drinking water systems. Based on the available scientific information on PFOA, **the New York State Department of Health recommends that you do not use your water for drinking, cooking, or food preparation.** Your water continues to be acceptable for household uses such as showering, bathing, cleaning and washing dishes.

We will inform you when actions have been taken to reduce the contamination and the Department of Health determines that the water is acceptable for all uses. Currently, bottled water is being provided.

#### **Why is the Department of Health recommending not to use the water for drinking or food preparation?**

This recommendation was made out of an abundance of caution. The Department of Health determined that the levels in your drinking water considerably reduce the margin of protection provided by the MCL and is best addressed by taking both interim and long-term measures to reduce exposure. Interim measures can include using bottled water for drinking and food preparation while long-term solutions to lower PFOA in your water are underway. This approach also recognizes that the science of PFOA health effects in humans continues to evolve and that there are uncertainties about the risk from the levels found in your drinking water.

#### **What are the health effects of PFOA?**

The available information on the health effects associated with PFOA, like many chemicals, comes from studies of high-level exposure in animals. Less is known about the chances of health effects occurring from lower levels of exposure, such as those that might occur in drinking water. As a result, finding lower levels of chemicals in drinking water prompts water suppliers and regulators to take precautions that include notifying consumers and taking steps to reduce exposure.

PFOA has caused a wide range of health effects when studied in animals that were exposed to high levels. The most consistent findings in animals were effects on the liver and immune system and impaired fetal growth and development. PFOA also causes cancer in laboratory animals exposed to high levels over their lifetimes.

Additional studies of exposures of PFOA in people provide evidence that some of the health effects seen in animals may also occur in humans.

### **What is New York State doing about PFOA in public drinking water?**

The New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) has adopted a drinking water regulation that requires all public water systems to test for PFOA. If found above the MCL of 10 ppt, the water supplier must take steps to lower the level to meet the standard. Exceedances of the MCL signal that steps should be taken by the water system to reduce contaminant levels.

### **What is being done to meet the MCL?**

Pequenakonck Elementary School is currently on a Bottled Water Notice and the public water system is not being used for consumption.

North Salem Central School District's engineering firm has designed a mitigation plan to reduce the PFOA levels. The scope of the project includes the installation of granular activated carbon (GAC) filtration systems. The plan was submitted to Westchester County Department of Health for review and comments were sent back by the DOH on 05/02/23 to the school district. On Friday, November 17, 2023, the WCDOH approved the filtration plan submitted by the District's engineering firm. This means that we can move forward, request bids, and build the filtration plant.

On February 8, 2024 bids received from contractors to build the filtration plant were opened. The qualified low bid at \$1,405,850 was \$715,000 over the initial projected cost of almost three years earlier. This was the result of major changes in WCDOH standards to significantly expand the scope of the project. Therefore on May 21st, we are asking the North Salem Central School District taxpayers to approve a proposition for \$715,000 so that the District is authorized to construct water system upgrades at the PQ Elementary School.

### **Where can I get more information?**

For more information, please contact Joannes Sieverding at 914-669-5414 ext. 1037. You can also contact the Westchester County Health Department at 914-813-5000.

If you have additional questions about these contaminants and your health, talk to your health care provider who is most familiar with your health history and can provide advice and assistance about understanding how drinking water may affect your personal health.

General information about the New York State public drinking water is also available at [www.health.ny.gov/publicwater](http://www.health.ny.gov/publicwater).

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