

# INFORMATION ABOUT PFAS TESTING IN YOUR DRINKING WATER

[WATER SYSTEM]

[PWSID]

## WHAT ARE PFAS?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, also called “PFAS,” are a group of manufactured chemicals that have been used in industry and consumer products since the 1940s. PFAS have characteristics that make them useful in a variety of products, including nonstick cookware, waterproof clothing, stain-resistant carpets and fabrics, and firefighting foam, as well as in certain manufacturing processes. There are thousands of different PFAS. The domestic production or use of some PFAS (like PFOA and PFOS) has been largely phased out but others continue to be used.

PFAS tend to break down extremely slowly in the environment and can build up in people, animals, and the environment over time. PFAS have been found in water, air, and soil across the nation and around the globe. Because of this, PFAS can end up in the water sources that communities rely on for drinking water. Scientific studies show links between certain levels of PFAS exposure over time and harmful health effects in humans and animals.

Additional information on PFAS from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/pfas>.

[Keep the following section in BLUE if sharing UCMR5 results; delete if sharing DOW Study results.]

## WHAT IS THE FIFTH UNREGULATED CONTAMINANT MONITORING RULE (UCMR 5)?

The Safe Drinking Water Act requires that once every five years EPA issue a list of unregulated contaminants to be monitored by public water systems. The Fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 5) was published on December 27, 2021. UCMR 5 requires sample collection for 30 chemical contaminants between 2023 and 2025 using analytical methods developed by EPA and consensus organizations. This action provides EPA and other interested parties with scientifically valid data on the national occurrence of these contaminants in drinking water. Consistent with EPA’s PFAS Strategic Roadmap, UCMR 5 will provide new data that is critically needed to improve EPA’s understanding of the frequency that 29 PFAS (and lithium) are found in the nation’s drinking water systems and at what levels. This data will ensure science-based decision-making and help prioritize protection of disadvantaged communities.

More information on the UCMR 5 can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-02/ucmr5-factsheet.pdf>.

## WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT PFAS IN MY DRINKING WATER?

[Keep the following section in GREEN if sharing DOW Study results; delete if sharing UCMR5 results.]

The Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet (EEC) collected and analyzed drinking water samples from 81 community public drinking water treatment plants (WTPs) for PFAS in 2019 and have extended the study to include 113 WTPs in 2023. Samples were collected at [WATER SYSTEM] on [DATE]. The results for PFAS that have an EPA Drinking Water Health Advisory Level and/or proposed National Primary Drinking Water Regulation (NPDWR) Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) are provided in the table below. The full report is attached.

[Keep the following section in BLUE if sharing UCMR5 results; delete if sharing DOW Study results.]

[WATER SYSTEM] started testing our drinking water for UCMR 5 on [DATE]. EPA requires that we notify you within 12 months of the availability of this data and include it in our Consumer Confidence Report that is issued annually; however, we believe it is important to share it with you now.

The results for PFAS that have an EPA Drinking Water Health Advisory Level and/or proposed National Primary Drinking Water Regulation (NPDWR) Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) are provided in the table below. The full report is attached.

EPA anticipates posting the first set of national preliminary UCMR 5 results in mid-2023 and expects to update the results approximately quarterly thereafter at <https://www.epa.gov/dwucmr/occurrence-data-unregulated-contaminant-monitoring-rule#5>.

PFAS	MRL <sup>1</sup> (ppt)	EPA Health Advisory Level (ppt) <sup>2</sup>	Proposed NPDWR MCL	Sample Results (ppt)	Hazard Index Calculation
perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA)	4	0.004 (interim)	4.0 ppt		
perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS)	4	0.02 (interim)	4.0 ppt		
hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid (HFPO-DA) (GenX chemicals)	5	10 (final)	1.0 Hazard Index <sup>3</sup> (unitless)		
perfluorobutanesulfonic acid (PFBS)	3	2,000 (final)			
perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS)	3				
perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA)	4				

<sup>1</sup> MRL - Minimum Reporting Level, lowest concentration that can reliably be measured.

<sup>2</sup> ppt - parts per trillion (ppt)

<sup>3</sup> Hazard Index - A tool to evaluate the potential increased health risk from mixtures of PFAS that may be found together in contaminated water.

[Keep the following section in GREEN if sharing DOW Study results; delete if sharing UCMR5 results or if UCMR 5 not required for water system.]

Additionally, in [YEAR], [WATER SYSTEM] will start testing our drinking water for 29 PFAS by participating in the EPA Fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule program, or UCMR 5. UCMR 5 requires sample collection for 30 chemical contaminants between 2023 and 2025 using analytical methods developed by EPA and consensus organizations. This action provides EPA, EEC, and other interested parties with scientifically valid data on the occurrence of these contaminants in drinking water. Consistent with EPA’s PFAS Strategic Roadmap, UCMR 5 will provide new data that is critically needed to improve understanding of the frequency that 29 PFAS (and lithium) are found in the nation’s drinking water systems and at what levels. This data will ensure science-based decision-making and help prioritize protection of disadvantaged communities. We will share the results from our UCMR 5 sampling in the Consumer Confidence Report [Include other means of sharing results, if applicable].

EPA anticipates posting the first set of national preliminary UCMR5 results in mid-2023 and expects to update the results approximately quarterly thereafter at <https://www.epa.gov/dwucmr/occurrence-data-unregulated-contaminant-monitoring-rule#5>.

More information on the UCMR 5 can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-02/ucmr5-factsheet.pdf>.

## WHAT IS BEING DONE ABOUT PFAS IN DRINKING WATER?

On June 15, 2022, EPA issued interim updated drinking water health advisories for PFOA and PFOS. At the same time, EPA also issued final health advisories for PFBS and GenX chemicals. EPA health advisories are non-enforceable and non-regulatory.

More information on EPA's health advisory levels is available at <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/questions-and-answers-drinking-water-health-advisories-pfoa-pfos-genx-chemicals-and-pfbs>.

On March 14, 2023, EPA proposed a new drinking water regulation to establish legally enforceable limits for six PFAS known to occur in drinking water. The six PFAS are PFOA, PFOS, GenX chemicals, PFBS, PFHxS, and PFNA. No action is required for drinking water systems until EPA finalizes the rule, which is expected around the end of 2023.

[Include any actions your water system may be taking or planning to take to address PFAS. If you are a purchasing system, you may include information about what your wholesaler is doing or planning to do.]

## WHAT EPA IS PROPOSING AND WHAT DO WATER SYSTEMS HAVE TO DO?

Specifically, EPA is proposing:

- **An enforceable limit for PFOA and PFOS.** EPA is proposing to regulate PFOA and PFOS at a level they can be reliably measured, which is 4.0 parts per trillion (ppt).
- **An enforceable limit on a combination of GenX chemicals, PFBS, PFHxS, and PFNA.** The proposed rule also would place limits on any mixture containing one or more of GenX chemicals, PFBS, PFHxS, and/or PFNA. For these PFAS, water systems would use an approach called a hazard index. This approach protects communities from the additive effects of multiple PFAS when they occur together.
- **Monitoring.** EPA is proposing requirements for monitoring for the six PFAS that build upon EPA's long established monitoring framework.
- **Public notification.** Public water systems would be required to notify the public if monitoring detects these PFAS at levels that exceed the proposed limits.
- **Treatment.** Public water systems would be required to take actions to reduce the levels of these PFAS in drinking water if they exceed the proposed limits. This could include removing these chemicals through various types of treatment or switching to an alternative water supply that meets the standard.

More information on EPA's proposed PFAS drinking water regulation is available at <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>.

### WHAT IS A PART PER TRILLION?

A part per trillion describes the amount of something, in this case PFAS, in water or soil. Here is an idea of what that means:



## **CAN I STILL DRINK MY TAP WATER AND USE IT TO COOK AND BATHE?**

Yes. EPA is not recommending bottled water for communities based solely on concentrations of PFAS chemicals in drinking water that exceed the health advisory levels. They also highlight that PFAS cannot be removed by heating or boiling water. If you choose to test your water yourself, it is important to use a state-certified laboratory using EPA-developed testing methods. If you remain concerned about the level of PFAS in your drinking water, you may consider installing an in-home water treatment device that is certified by an independent party, currently available for PFAS (NSF P473), and maintained to ensure that the treatment remains effective over time.

More information is available below and at <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/questions-and-answers-drinking-water-health-advisories-pfoa-pfos-genx-chemicals-and-pfbs#q6>.

## **WHAT CAN I DO TO REDUCE MY OVERALL EXPOSURE TO PFAS?**

Because certain PFAS are known to cause risks to human health, and due to their pervasiveness, the most important steps you and your family can take to protect your health is to understand how to limit your exposure. Learn more at <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/meaningful-and-achievable-steps-you-can-take-reduce-your-risk>.

## **WHERE CAN I FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT PFAS?**

[Delete the following sentence if it does not apply.]

More information on PFAS is on the [WATER SYSTEM] website at [LINK].

Learn more about PFAS in Kentucky at <https://eec.ky.gov/PFAS>.

Read EPA's PFAS Strategic Roadmap at <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/pfas-strategic-roadmap-epas-commitments-action-2021-2024>.

EPA explains PFAS at <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/pfas-explained>.

PFAS health effect information can also be found on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/health-effects/index.html>.