

Town of Hudson Public Water System

Important Information about Your Drinking Water

-- Translate it or speak with someone who understands it --

What happened?

Although we are not required by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to routinely monitor for Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS), we have been sampling our water supply for PFAS quarterly since August 2016 at the direction of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). In May 2016, USEPA issued a lifetime Health Advisory (HA) of 70 parts per trillion (0.07 ug/L) for the combination of two PFAS chemicals. Our treated water results have been below the EPA advisory level.

Based on additional consideration of information about PFAS, and out of an abundance of caution, MassDEP has adopted a more conservative guideline addressing an additional three PFAS chemicals, because these compounds share very similar chemical structures and the available data indicates they are likely to exhibit similar toxicities. In June 2018, MassDEP's Office of Research and Standards established a drinking water guideline (ORSG) for the following five PFAS chemicals: perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS) and perfluoroheptanoic acid (PFHpA). MassDEP recommends that:

- 1) water suppliers take steps expeditiously to lower levels of the five PFAS, individually or in combination, to below 70 parts per trillion for all consumers and,
- 2) consumers in sensitive subgroups (pregnant women, nursing mothers and infants) not consume, drink or cook with water when the level of the five PFAS substances, individually or in combination, is above 70 parts per trillion.

The sample result collected on January 24, 2019 from the treated water at the Chestnut Street Water Treatment Plant for the five PFAS chemicals was 76 parts per trillion, which is above MassDEP's ORSG.

What is our water system doing?

The Hudson Public Water System provides treated water to consumers from one surface water supply (Gates Pond) and four groundwater sources that are blended and treated at the Chestnut Street Water Treatment Plant. Sampling results from the individual groundwater wells (before blending) show that some wells contain PFAS above 70 ppt. To reduce the amount of PFAS in the treated water and ensure an adequate supply of water to customers the following measures are being taken:

- The Cranberry Bog Well was immediately removed from service.
- The treated water at the Chestnut Street Water Treatment Plant was resampled on February 19, 2019 without the Cranberry Bog Well on line. The result for the five PFAS chemicals was 56 ppt, which is below MassDEP's ORSG.
- We are working as expeditiously as possible to install treatment to remove the PFAS from Hudson's drinking water.
- We are investigating the source of the PFAS.
- We will continue to sample our individual water sources and the treated water for PFAS, and when additional information becomes available this public notice will be updated.
- Prior to the Cranberry Bog Well being returned to use, public notice will be provided, which will include additional sample results for PFAS and an explanation of treatment or other actions taken to support the return of the well to service.

What should you do?

- ***You do not need to do anything at this time because the PFAS levels are currently below MassDEP's ORSG and EPA's Health Advisory.***
- ***If you have specific health concerns regarding your past exposure, you should consult a health professional, such as your doctor.***

What are PFAS?

PFAS are contained in firefighting foams, which have been used in training exercises and to extinguish oil and gas fires at a variety of locations including airfields. PFAS are also used in a number of industrial processes and have been used to make carpets, clothing, fabrics for furniture, paper packaging for food and other materials (e.g. cookware) that are resistant to water, grease or stains. Because these chemicals have been used in an array of consumer products, most people have been exposed to them.

Between 2000 and 2002, PFOS was voluntarily phased-out of production in the U.S. by its primary manufacturer. In 2006, eight major companies voluntarily agreed to phase out their global production of PFOA and PFOA-related chemicals, although there are a limited number of ongoing uses.

While consumer products and food are a large source of exposure to these chemicals for most people, drinking water can be an additional source in the small percentage of communities where these chemicals have contaminated water supplies. Such contamination is typically localized and associated with a specific facility, for example, an industrial facility where these chemicals were produced or used to manufacture other products or an airfield at which they were used for firefighting.

For more information on PFAS see the attached MassDEP Factsheet or visit the websites listed below.

What are the potential adverse health effects with exposure to PFAS?

EPA's 2016 Health Advisory values for PFOS and PFOA were based on recent studies of these substances in laboratory animals and were also informed by studies of exposed people. Overall, these studies indicate that exposure to sufficiently elevated levels of PFOA and PFOS may cause developmental effects in fetuses during pregnancy and in breastfed infants. Effects on the thyroid, the liver, kidneys, hormone levels and the immune system have also been reported. Some studies also suggest a cancer risk may exist in people exposed to levels well above the Health Advisory. The additional three PFAS chemicals are chemically similar to PFOS and PFOA.

It is important to note that consuming water with PFAS above the 70 parts per trillion level does not mean that adverse effects will occur. The degree of risk depends on the level of the chemicals and the duration of exposure. The 70 parts per trillion level assumes that individuals drink only contaminated water, which typically overestimates exposure, and are also exposed to PFAS from sources beyond drinking water, such as food. To enhance safety, several uncertainty factors are additionally applied to account for the differences between animals and humans and the differences from one human to another human. Scientists are still working to study and understand the health risks posed by exposures to PFAS.

Where can I get more information?

For more information, please contact Eric Ryder, Director of Public Works at 978-562-9333, email address: water@townofhudson.org, or Hudson Department of Public Works, 1 Municipal Drive, Hudson Ma 01749.

You can also get more information from the following sources:

MassDEP Fact Sheet – PFAS in Drinking Water: Questions and Answers for Consumers

https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/06/11/pfas-in-dw-fs_0.pdf?_ga=2.157052219.1444645447.1551126466-592822106.1550766832

EPA's Drinking Water Health Advisories can be found at:

<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/drinking-water-health-advisories-pfoa-and-pfos>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Public Health Statement for PFOS and PFOA can be found at:

<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/index.html>

NSF certified filters to reduce PFOA and PFOS concentrations in drinking water:

<http://www.nsf.org/newsroom/nsf-international-certifies-first-water-filters-pfoa>

For additional information on possible health effects, you may contact the Massachusetts Department Environmental Protection, Office of Research and Standards, at 617-556-1165.

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:
Eric M. Ryder

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Enc.: MassDEP Fact Sheet –PFAS in Drinking Water: Questions and Answers for Consumers