

November 22, 2025

NOTICE

Perfluoroalkyl Substances in Drinking Water

Atascadero Mutual Water Company (AMWC) is required to inform its customers that the drinking water it supplies has concentrations of four perfluoroalkyl substances that exceed the notification levels established by the California State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board) pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 116455. These substances are perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS), and perfluorohexanoic acid (PFHxA).

AMWC is currently designing a treatment facility that will remove PFAS from the water using granulated activated carbon (GAC). A pilot study using different mediums shows that GAC effectively removes PFAS from the water. The facility design is approximately 90% complete. Construction and operation of the facility will be costly and have a significant impact on water rates.

A notification level is a health-based advisory level established by the Water Board for a contaminant in drinking water that lacks an established maximum contaminant level (MCL). The notification level for PFOS is 6.5 parts per trillion (ppt), for PFOA is 5.1 ppt, PFHxS is 3.0 ppt, and PFHxA is 1.0 ppt. One part per trillion (ppt) is equivalent to 1 ounce in 7.8 billion gallons, 1 teaspoon in 1.25 billion gallons, or 1 second in 32,000 years.

A response level is the concentration of a contaminant in drinking water at which the Water Board recommends that additional steps, beyond notification, be taken to reduce exposure to the contaminant, such as taking the water source (e.g., well) out of service. The response level for PFOS is 40 ppt, for PFOA is 10.0 ppt, and PFHxS is 20.0 ppt. The drinking water currently being supplied by AMWC does not exceed the established response levels for PFOS, PFOA, PFHxS, or PFHxA. AMWC is currently blending water from several sources to maintain levels of these contaminants below the response levels.

PFOS, PFOA, PFHxS, and PFHxA have been extensively produced and studied in the United States. These manmade substances have been synthesized for water and lipid (e.g., fat & oil) resistance. They have been used extensively in consumer products such as carpets, clothing, cosmetics, fabrics for furniture, paper packaging for food, and other materials (e.g., cookware) designed to be waterproof, stain-resistant, or non-stick. In addition, they have been used in fire-retarding foam and various industrial processes.

The origin of these contaminants in our water supply is currently unknown. AMWC is currently continuing to monitor the PFOS, PFOA, PFHxS, and PFHxA levels in its water sources.

Activated carbon water filters and reverse osmosis have been shown to be effective at removing PFAS, according to the EPA ([Reducing PFAS in Drinking Water with Treatment Technologies | US EPA](#)).

For more information on PFAS contamination, visit www.amwc.us and/or www.waterboards.ca.gov/pfas/. Additional information is provided to our customers in AMWC's annual Consumer Confidence Report.

IF YOU HAVE TENANTS, PLEASE PROVIDE THEM WITH A COPY OF THIS NOTICE

Perfluoroalkyl Substances

Contaminant:

PFAS = perfluoroalkyl substances

- PFOA = perfluorooctanoic acid
- PFOS = perfluorooctane sulfonic acid
- PFHxS = perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS)
- PFHxA = perfluorohexanoic acid (PFHxA).

Description:

PFAS are a group of man-made chemicals that includes PFOA, PFOS, and many other chemicals. They have been manufactured and used in a variety of industries around the globe, including in the United States since the 1940s. PFOA and PFOS have been the most extensively produced and studied of these chemicals. Both chemicals are very persistent in the environment and in the human body – meaning they don't break down and they can accumulate over time.

Manufacturers:

3M, DuPont, Others. PFOA and PFOS are no longer manufactured in the United States. They are still produced internationally and can be imported into the United States in consumer goods.

Common products:

Food containers (pizza boxes, sandwich wrappers, popcorn bags), non-stick pots & pans, stain treatments for clothing & furniture (Scotchgard, Stainmaster), carpet & carpet treatments, cosmetics (eye shadow, foundation, facial powder, bronzer & blush), shampoos, fire-fighting foams

Possible sources of PFAS:

Fire-fighting activities that used fire suppression foam, industrial activities, landfills, wastewater treatment facilities

Are there health effects from PFAS?

There is evidence that exposure to PFAS can lead to adverse health outcomes in humans. If humans ingest PFAS (by eating or drinking food or water that contain PFAS), the PFAS are absorbed, and can accumulate in the body. PFAS stay in the human body for long periods of time. As a result, as people get exposed to PFAS from different sources over time, the level of PFAS in their bodies may increase to the point where they suffer from adverse health effects. Studies indicate that PFOA and PFOS can cause reproductive and developmental, liver and kidney, and immunological effects in laboratory animals. Both chemicals have caused tumors in animal studies. The most consistent findings from human epidemiology studies are increased cholesterol levels among exposed populations

More information:

EPA website - <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/basic-information-pfas>

EPA FAQ sheet - https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-06/documents/drinkingwaterhealthadvisories_pfoa_pfos_updated_5.31.16.pdf