IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Bethlehem TWP BOE Has Levels of Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid (PFOS) Above A Drinking Water Standard

Bethlehem TWP BOE Failed to Take Permanent Action to Bring Our Water into Compliance with the Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid (PFOS) Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) Within One Year

Our water system recently violated a New Jersey drinking water MCL and requirement, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

You were previously notified of the PFOS MCL violation in public notice(s) issued on March 25, 2022, June 24, 2022, September 21, 2022, December 1, 2022, February 27, 2023, May 24, 2023, September 8, 2023, December 21, 2023, March 21, 2024, June 21, 2024, and September 20, 2024. The most recent public notice and update regarding this matter are available at https://tces.btschools.org/ and at Thomas B. Conley School.

We routinely monitor for the presence of federal and state regulated drinking water contaminants. During July 1, 2021, to September 30, 2021, we initially exceeded the MCL for PFOS. Per the New Jersey Safe Drinking Water Act, our water system is required to take any action necessary to bring the water into compliance with the applicable MCL within one-year from the initial violation. Our water system failed to remediate the PFOS MCL violation by the one-year deadline of August 2, 2022.

New Jersey adopted a standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for PFOA in 2020 and monitoring began in 2021. The MCL for PFOS is 0.013 parts per billion (ppb) and is based on a running annual average (RAA), in which the four most recent quarters of monitoring data are averaged. On December 17, 2024, we collected the fourth quarterly sample in 2024 and the results showed PFOS levels of 0.00357 ppb. Based on samples collected over the last four quarters, the PFOS RAA is 0.010 ppb. Although the RAA is currently below the MCL set for PFOS, public notification must be repeated every three months until permanent treatment is in place to remove PFOS from the drinking water.

What is PFOS?

Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) is a member of the group of chemicals called per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), that are man-made and used in industrial and commercial applications. PFOS is used in metal plating and finishing as well as in various commercial products. PFOS 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 greaseproof food packaging. Major sources of PFOS 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 PFOS 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 PFOS in excess of the MCL over time could experience problems with their immune system, kidney, liver, or endocrine system. For females, drinking water containing PFOS in excess of the MCL over time may cause developmental effects and problems with the immune system, liver, or endocrine system 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 and https://www.nj.gov/dep/pfas/index.html.

What should I do?

- If you have specific health concerns, a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at higher risk than other individuals and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water.
- The New Jersey Department of Health advises that infant formula and other beverages for infants, such as juice, should be prepared with bottled water when PFOS is elevated in drinking water.
- Pregnant, nursing, and women considering having children may choose to use bottled water for drinking and cooking to reduce exposure to PFOS.
- Other people may also choose to use bottled water for drinking and cooking to reduce exposure to PFOS. Or use a home water filter that is certified to reduce levels of PFOS. Home water treatment devices are available that can reduce levels of PFOS. For more specific information regarding the effectiveness of home water filters for reducing PFOS, visit the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) International website, http://www.nsf.org/.
- Boiling your water will not remove PFOS.

For more information, see https://www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/pfas/.

What is being done?

The Thomas Conley Elementary School will continue to provide bottled water to the school until PFOS compliance is met. Drinking water fountains at the school have been sealed (wrapped in plastic) from access and use since February 2020, due to COVID restrictions, and will remain sealed until PFOS compliance is met. The water bottle filling stations have also been sealed to restrict access. PFOS sampling will continue on a quarterly basis. Corrective actions will remain in effect until remedial treatment for PFOS has been established, which is anticipated to be installed by the end of 2025.

For more information, please contact Kirby Hendershot at khendershot@btschools.org or at 908-479-6336 or at Bethlehem TWP BOE – Thomas Conley Elementary School 2580 West Road, Asbury, New Jersey 08802.

> **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 Bethlehem TWP BOE. State Water System ID#: NJ1002311.

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