
Passaic Valley Water Commission takes proactive measures to eliminate PFAS contamination

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Clifton, N.J. – September 20, 2023) – Recently in the news, there has been a lot of information and warnings about PFAS chemicals in water. PFAS stands for Per and Polyfluoroalkyl substances and are manufactured chemicals that can be found in food packaging, non-stick cookware, stain-resistant fabrics, stain resistant carpets and firefighting foam. Over time, PFAS naturally breaks down and accumulates in air, soil and water and can be ingested by the human body.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) have been requiring water companies to monitor for PFAS for years. However, as instrumentation becomes more advanced, smaller amounts of particles in water can be detected, and the NJDEP and the US EPA can lower the requirements for Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs). The new US EPA regulations for PFAS have been proposed and are scheduled to be finalized by the end of 2023. Water systems will need to comply with the new regulations starting three years after the final rule is adopted. The regulation includes two MCLs (PFAS and PFOS at 4ng/L) or 4 nano grams per one liter of water; and a “hazard index” of <1.0, meaning the risk factor is such that the contaminant is not expected to create a health problem. A gram is about 1/30 of an ounce and a nano gram is about one billionth of a gram.

“At Passaic Valley Water Commission (PVWC), we want our customers to understand the issues affecting their water system,” said Jim Mueller, PVWC executive director. “To ensure PVWC is prepared for the new PFAS Rule, PVWC has hired Cornwell Engineering to perform a pilot study to help us determine what types of modifications/upgrades will be needed at the Little Falls Water Treatment Plant. Once these determinations are made, this will assure PVWC will remain in compliance if the new PFAS Rule goes into effect in 2024,” Mr. Mueller continued.

PVWC is pleased to say it already has experience with removing PFAS from water. In August 2022, PVWC completed the installation of a resin ion exchange system to remove high levels of PFAS in West Milford’s Nosenzo Pond well system. The Nosenzo Pond well system had PFAS levels well above the current MCL and are now non-detect. The difference between Nosenzo



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Pond and our Little Falls Water Treatment Plant is the volume of water treated. Since the amount of water is significantly larger at our Little Falls Water Treatment Plant, PVWC needs to ensure the treatment process will be adequate.

As rules and regulations continue to change within the water industry, PVWC will keep its customers updated and informed on how industry changes will affect our water. If there are any questions, please feel free to call customer service at 973-340-4300.

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PVWC is New Jersey's largest public water utility, serving over 800,000 consumers in Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris and Passaic counties. For more information, please call customer service at 973-340-4300 or visit pvwc.com, or follow us on Twitter (@PVWC), Instagram (@passaic_valley_water) and/or Facebook (@thePVWC).