

ATTENTION BOROUGH OF EMMAUS RESIDENTS
IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

PERFLUOROOCTANE SULFONATE (PFOS) / PERFLUOROOCTANOIC ACID (PFOA) MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL (MCL) EXCEEDANCE

ESTE INFORME CONTIENE INFORMACIÓN IMPORTANTE ACERCA DE SU AGUA POTABLE. HAGA QUE ALGUIEN LO TRADUZCA PARA USTED, O HABLE CON ALGUIEN QUE LO ENTIENDA.

The Borough of Emmaus has levels of perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) above drinking water standards.

Our water system recently exceeded the drinking water standard for maximum contaminant level (MCL) for PFOS/ PFOA. Although this incident was not an emergency, as our residents and customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct this situation.

For the safety of our residents and customers, we routinely run tests to monitor drinking water contaminants in our water system. Testing results for samples collected on **February 11, 2025**, were received on **February 26, 2025**, and show that our system exceeds the standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for PFOS/ PFOA. The standard for PFOS is 18 parts per trillion (18 ng/L) and 14 parts per trillion (14 ng/L) for PFOA. PFOS and PFOA were found in your drinking water at a level of **153 ng/L** for PFOS and **19 ng/L** for PFOA.

What should I do?

You do not need to use an alternative (e.g., bottled) water supply. However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor. We recommend conducting your own research as well as reading the information presented by the Borough of Emmaus.

What does this mean?

This is not an immediate risk. However, exposure to PFOS and PFOA over the MCL may result in adverse health effects. Drinking water containing PFOS/ PFOA in excess of the MCL of PFOS/ PFOA may cause adverse health effects, including developmental effects to fetuses during pregnancy or to breastfed infants (e.g. low birth weight, accelerated puberty, skeletal variations), cancer (e.g. testicular, kidney), liver effects (e.g. tissue damage), immune effects (e.g. antibody production and immunity), thyroid effects and other effects (e.g. cholesterol changes). A recent USGS study indicates that over 45% of all drinking water in the US and 76% of all Pennsylvania streams contain PFAS.

What are PFOS and PFOA?

PFOS and PFOA are chemicals that are part of a larger group referred to as perfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). These are man-made chemicals and do not occur naturally in the environment. They have been used to make items that are resistant to water, grease, or stains such as cookware, carpets, and packaging. PFAS often shows up on items such as wild caught fish, dust particles, food that was packaged in different types of containers (such as popcorn), cleaning products, stain resistant carpet, water repellent clothing, non-stick cookware, fast food wrappers, pizza boxes, candy wrappers, and even certain plastic containers you drink from. PFAS has been found in surface water and rainwater. They are also used in industrial processes and in firefighting foams. Since these substances are resistant to heat, water, and oil they persist in the environment and in the human body. Due to the prevalence of PFAS in consumer products, it is likely that most people have been exposed to these substances through other sources besides drinking water.

What happened? What was done?

The initial steps taken by the Borough of Emmaus included immediately shutting down well #2 and conducting a feasibility study. Through the issuance of public notifications, auto dials, and articles in the Borough Newsletter and on our website, we are keeping our residents and customers informed of the results from continual monitoring of PFOS/ PFOA levels in our drinking water, ongoing engineering, and status of a permanent solution for the Borough's water system from applying for PA DEP permits to its construction. Due to the complexity of the system, we anticipate implementing a permanent solution within 2 years.

For more information, please call 610-965-9292 to speak with the Public Works Director or the Borough Manager.

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.

Shane M. Pepe
Borough Manager
EPP
March 26, 2025