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Barbara Fischer
Clerk - Treasurer

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER PFOS MCL Exceedance at Valatie Village Water System

Why are you receiving this notice/information?

You are receiving this notice because testing of our public water system found the chemical perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) in your drinking water at 14 ppt. This is above New York State's maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 10 ppt for PFOS in public drinking water systems. **The MCL is set well below levels known or estimated to cause health effects. Consuming drinking water with PFOS at or somewhat above the MCL does not pose a significant health risk. Your water continues to be acceptable for all uses. The Valatie Village is working on a strict timetable to reduce levels below the MCL.**

What are the health effects of PFOS?

The available information on the health effects associated with PFOS, like many chemicals, comes mostly from studies of high-level exposure in animals. Less is known about the chances of health effects occurring from lower levels of exposure, such as those that might occur in drinking water. As a result, finding lower levels of chemicals in drinking water prompts water suppliers and regulators to take precautions that include notifying consumers and steps to reduce exposure. PFOS has caused a wide range of health effects when studied in animals that were exposed to high levels. The most consistent findings in animals were effects on the liver and immune system and impaired fetal growth and development. The United States Environmental Protection Agency considers PFOS as having suggestive evidence for causing cancer based on studies of animals exposed to high levels of this chemical over their entire lifetimes. Additional studies of high-level exposures of PFOS in people provide evidence that some of the health effects seen in animals may also occur in humans.

At the level of PFOS detected in your water, exposure from drinking water and food preparation is well below PFOS exposures associated with health effects.

What is New York State doing about PFOS in public drinking water?

The New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) has adopted a drinking water regulation that requires all public water systems to test for PFOS. If found above the MCL of 10 ppt, the water supplier must take steps to lower the level to meet the standard. Exceedances of the MCL signal that steps should be taken by the water system to reduce contaminant levels.

Village Offices

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What is being done to meet the MCL?

Valatie Village is working with Columbia County Department of Health and New York State Department of Health on a compliance schedule that includes steps to reduce levels of PFOS. Starting in 2021, New York State has required all Community and Non-Transient Non-Community Water Systems to begin initial quarterly PFOA/PFOS water monitoring. Community systems, such as the Valatie Village municipal supply, were required to obtain quarterly samples for a full year from each well water source. The Village has satisfied this requirement by obtaining quarterly 2021 PFOA/PFOS samples from each active well serving the village. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Maximum Contaminant Limit (MCL) for PFOS is 70 parts per trillion- New York State has set a more stringent allowable limit of 10 parts per trillion. The Village of Valatie presently has four wells with the ability to supply water to its consumers. Currently, only Well #1 has shown a slight exceedance of PFOS at the level of 14 ppt. Well #3 has previously been offline due to concerns that it may yield ground water under the influence of surface water. The two remaining wells have currently indicated PFOA/PFOS sampling results below the MCL of 10 ppt. The two additional wells (Well #2 and Well #4 respectively) are continuing to yield PFOA/PFOS results below the MCL of 10 ppt and are not in exceedance or violation at this time. The Village will continue to sample each well for PFOA/PFOS on a quarterly basis going forward as required by New York State. Quarterly sampling will monitor for any upward or downward trend with the PFOS exceedance shown in Well #1. Well #1 has been taken completely off line after third quarter results indicated the PFOS exceedance of 14 ppt. Well #1 remains off line since October 2021. Currently the Village is using Well #2 and Well #4 concurrently to supply sufficient and adequate water to its consumers. Additionally, our department has obtained two “blended” water samples from Well #1 and Well #2 while pumping at the same rate simultaneously indicating a mixed or blended sample for PFOA/PFOS of Well #1 and Well #2. These “blended” samples obtained in December 2021 have indicated levels of PFOS below the MCL of 10 ppt. This indicates Well #1 is in compliance when blended with Well #2 and could run during an emergency situation where Well #4 or Well #2 needed repairs allowing the Village to run Well #1 concurrently with Well #2 or Well #4 to meet demand. The State Health Department has indicated this blended sample is acceptable and not a violation or exceedance, but is not to be used as a long term solution to compliance. As such, the Village has opted to keep Well #1 off line and it will not be used unless emergency circumstance deems it necessary. Going forward, Well #1 will remain offline. The Village will continue to obtain required quarterly samples from each well source to monitor PFOA/PFOS levels in the water supply. Valatie Village is working toward a long term solution to lower PFOS levels in the well field and prevent any upward trend of the contaminant. The Village will be developing a long term strategy of permanent treatment/filtration/mitigation for each well. Valatie Village will be moving forward with a permanent remedy, rendering the water system in compliance with no exceedance of PFOS. Additional information will be shared as further testing and progress occurs. This process is similar for any chemical detected in public drinking water that requires mitigation due to exceedance of an MCL. The compliance timetable will ensure that your drinking water will meet the MCL as rapidly as possible.

Where can I get more information?

For more information, please contact Frank Bevens at (518) 758-9806 or PO Box 457 Valatie, NY 12184. You can also contact the Columbia County Department of Health at (518) 828-3358. If you have additional questions about these contaminants and your health, talk to your health care provider who is most familiar with your health history and can provide advice and assistance about understanding how drinking water may affect your personal health.