# Forever Chemicals


**The EPA has announced new PFAS Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCL's). CCWSA and utilities across the Nation have been expecting and waiting on these new MCL's and have been working behind the scenes to be ready**.

PFAS are per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances commonly referred to as "forever chemicals" because they do not break down easily. These chemicals have been around since the 1930s and were originally widely used by companies like 3M, Dow Chemicals, and DuPont. PFAS is a shorthand reference for around 15,000 chemicals that make up the class of chemicals. These types of chemicals have been used in so many everyday products since the 1930s that, combined with the difficulty of disposal, has led to the ubiquitous presence of these chemicals in water and the environment. Everyday products continue to use PFAS chemicals, and some industries use PFAS-based products in their manufacturing processes. For example, thermal paper, food packaging, long-wear makeup, sunscreen, waterproofing sprays, fire-fighting foams, shampoo, dental floss, nail polish, stain-resistant sprays used for fabrics, carpeting, cookware, cleaning products, and many, many more.

On April 10, 2024, the EPA published the following legally enforceable levels (MCLs) for six chemicals and/or mixtures of chemicals:

PFOA: 4.0 parts per trillion (ppt)
PFOS: 4.0 ppt
PFHxS: 10 ppt
PFNA: 10 ppt
HFPO-DA: 10 ppt
Mixtures containing two or more of PFHxS, PFNA, HFPO-DA, and PFBS have a Hazard Index (HI) of 1 (unitless).

The publishing of legally enforceable MCLs was the next step in the EPA process. Earlier, the EPA released the approved methods for testing for these chemicals in both water and wastewater. Currently, methods 533 and 537.1 are approved for testing drinking water for PFAS. For wastewater, soils, landfill leachate, biosolids, and fish tissue testing the EPA recommends using method 1633.

So, what does this mean for drinking water utilities, and CCWSA specifically?

As previously mentioned, many utilities, and certainly CCWSA, have been working with the approved meth-ods to conduct sampling on our water source, and finished water that we put into the distribution system. After the first year of sampling CCWSA showed "BDL" or "below the detection limit" on all finished water, and raw water tested. But this is not the end of testing. CCWSA plans to continue testing for another two years to develop trends in the raw water supply. Essentially, we want to make sure that nothing changes in the raw water supply that would require us to treat for PFAS. These tests will inform how we navigate the future of being able to supply high-quality drinking water. Additionally, future testing will need to be done on the wastewater side to allow CCWSA to make informed decisions about PFAS compounds that may be passing through the plant and being discharged back into the environment. These PFAS compounds come directly from personal, commercial, and industrial uses within the community. It is the right of every customer to know what's in their water and to know how their water provider is handling new and emerging issues within water and wastewater. If you have any questions about PFAS, what CCWSA is doing, and the safety of your drinking water we are always here to answer those questions.

*If you have any topics you would like covered or have any questions in general, please email them to*

*ccwsaea@gmail.com*