



Arapahoe County Water & Wastewater Authority
13031 E Caley Ave, Centennial, CO 80111
303-790-4830 • acwwa.com

September 30, 2022

RE: PFAS – What are they and how do they affect me?

Dear ACWWA Customer,

As part of our commitment to public health and our ongoing efforts to keep our customers informed, this letter is to inform you that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently lowered its interim lifetime Health Advisory Level (HAL) for two per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Specifically, the HALs for two specific PFAS compounds, PFOA and PFOS, was lowered from 70 parts per trillion (ppt) combined to 0.004 ppt for PFOA and 0.02 ppt for PFOS.

What are PFAS?

PFAS are human-made chemicals that do not naturally occur in your water. They have commonly been used for their heat, water, and oil resistant properties in such things as firefighting foam and various consumer products. Widespread use of PFAS leads to human and animal exposure and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cites research that suggests elevated levels of certain PFAS may affect your health. A number of other Colorado communities have identified PFAS above the new HALs in their drinking water. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) has stated “[t]here is not an immediate public health risk and people do not need to stop drinking their water at this time.” The drinking water provided by ACWWA meets current drinking water regulations, and ACWWA is actively pursuing PFAS reduction strategies with CDPHE.

Knowing that PFAS have been detected in water systems throughout the country and elsewhere in Colorado, ACWWA voluntarily participated in testing its water supply in 2020. PFAS were detected in some sources at levels not much higher than the lab’s ability to accurately measure them. ***This does not pose an immediate threat to the public’s health.***

ACWWA’s treated drinking water has tested well-below 70 ppt since we first discovered PFAS in our water supply through voluntary testing in 2020. Most recently in July 2022, the PFAS concentrations in ACWWA’s treated water were 3.8 ppt for PFOA and 3.8 ppt for PFOS, which exceed the new, lower HALs. The EPA also set new HALs for two other PFAS compounds: hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid and its ammonium salt (together, GenX chemicals), and perfluorobutane sulfonic acid and its related compound (together, PFBS). Based on ACWWA’s data, GenX and PFBS concentrations in ACWWA’s drinking water are either non-detectable or well-below these new HALs. The EPA develops HALs to provide guidance. A

final EPA regulation is expected in the fall of 2023, at which time ACWWA will follow closely and ensure compliance.

PFAS	Interim Health Advisory	The Level in ACWWA's Treated Water:	What This Means:
PFOA	0.004 parts per trillion	3.8 parts per trillion	This is above the health advisory. Consider taking action to reduce your exposure.
PFOS	0.02 parts per trillion	3.8 parts per trillion	This is above the health advisory. Consider taking action to reduce your exposure.

These are very low microscopic levels or trace amounts. For perspective, 1 part per trillion equals 4 teaspoons in Cherry Creek Reservoir. According to the EPA, studies have found associations between PFOA and/or PFOS exposure and effects on the immune system, the cardiovascular system, human development (e.g., decreased birth weight), and cancer. EPA's lifetime health advisories identify levels to protect all people, including sensitive populations and life stages (such as infants), from negative health impacts resulting from exposure throughout their lives to these PFAS in drinking water. The health advisory levels were calculated to offer a margin of protection against potential adverse health effects. Visit <https://epa.gov/pfas> and <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/pfas-health> for more information.

What actions should I consider? What does this mean?

CDPHE has stated:

- ***There is not an immediate public health risk and people do not need to stop drinking their water at this time.***
- The lower your exposure, the lower your risk. We are committed to empowering you with information to help you make educated decisions. People can:
 - Reduce exposure from drinking water by using water treated by an in-home water treatment filter that is certified to lower the levels of PFAS or by using bottled water that has been treated with reverse osmosis for drinking, cooking, and preparing baby formula. Use tap water for bathing, showering, brushing teeth, washing hands, watering yards, washing dishes, cleaning, and laundry.
 - Reduce exposure from other sources. Visit <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/pfas-health> to learn more.
- Boiling, freezing, or letting water stand does not reduce PFAS levels.
- If you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor. An information sheet, "Talking to Your Health Care Provider about PFAS," is available at <https://bit.ly/PFAS-doctor>.

EPA and CDPHE do not recommend bottled water. CDPHE has stated "Using bottled water is an individual choice, but there are important concerns with bottled water. CDPHE cannot verify that all bottled water is below PFAS interim health advisories. Reverse osmosis is a

treatment that removes PFAS. CDPHE recommends people who use bottled water choose a brand that has been treated with reverse osmosis and includes this language on the bottle. Additionally, bottled water does not contain fluoride to support oral health and creates solid waste and other environmental concerns.”

What is ACWWA doing to address the situation?

While the new PFAS Health Advisory Level is not an enforceable standard and is non-regulatory, CDPHE has asked impacted water systems to inform their customers and further to take proactive steps to reduce PFAS in drinking water. In addition to ACWWA’s commitment to protecting public health and the environment, and past participation in voluntary testing, ACWWA is conducting regular water sampling and monitoring for PFAS at key points in our water treatment and delivery systems, pursuing state grants to fund PFAS water treatment projects, and collaborating with CDPHE and EPA to monitor the science around the health impacts of PFAS contaminants and identify the sources of PFAS in our raw water.

ACWWA takes our water quality very seriously. We are continuing to work with CDPHE to address this situation, and we will provide updates to the community as we learn more and continue to respond. You can count on us to get you the best information as it becomes available. If you have questions about levels of PFAS in ACWWA’s drinking water, you can continue to monitor ACWWA’s website and/or contact our Water Quality team at 303-790-4830 or contactus@arapahoewater.org. Additional PFAS information can be found at www.colorado.gov/cdphe/pfas. If you have questions about this information, you can also contact CO HELP at 303-389-1687 or 1-877-462-2911.

Sincerely,
Steve Witter
General 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, tenants, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in public places or by distributing copies by hand.