Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and Drinking Water Supplies

Are there PFAS (aka PFOA, PFOS, PFNA, etc) in the water that Mount Laurel MUA supplies?

Mount Laurel MUA's (MLMUA) water comes from a mix of sources: MLMUA treatment facilities, Willingboro MUA (WMUA) and New Jersey American Water Company (NJAWC). Testing performed on MLMUA's and WMUA's water in accordance with federal law (USEPA) under the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule 3 (UCMR3) indicated no detections. However, subsequent informational testing performed on NJAWC's and WMUA's water indicates presence of several PFAS below the new State (NJDEP) standards (more info below). Future regulatory testing detections will be reported in MLMUA's annual water quality report (CCR).

What are PFAS and how do they get into drinking water?

- PFAS are a class of manmade chemicals that have been used to make fluoropolymer coatings and products that are oil and water repellent such as Teflon®, StainMaster® carpets, Tyvek®, Scotchgard®, and GoreTex®. They have also been used to make surfactants that are used in firefighting foams and mist suppressants for metal plating operations.
- The main source of PFAS in water is via distribution of the substances on the ground either legally or illegally, as several PFAS are/were used for fire-fighting. The PFAS then leaches into groundwaters or is carried into surface waters; these waters may be used as potable water supply sources.

Are PFAS regulated?

- PFAS are not currently regulated in drinking water by USEPA; however, there is a federal health advisory of 70 ppt (parts per trillion) for PFOS and PFOA.
- New Jersey has set limits in drinking water for the following PFAS:
    - PFNA 13 ppt, effective January 1, 2020
    - PFOS 13 ppt, effective January 1, 2021
    - PFOA 14 ppt, effective January 1, 2021
- Production by major US manufacturers of PFOA, PFNA, PFOS, PFHxS and other long chain homologues has ended. However, these compounds are still produced in other countries and can be contained in products available for purchase in the US.

Can water treatment devices remove PFAS?

- Water provided to MLMUA customers is in compliance with drinking water requirements. Although in compliance, some forms of PFAS have been detected in water supplied to MLMUA customers.
- A home water treatment device should not be necessary; however, some customers may opt to install one. PFAS can be removed from drinking water by treatment systems specifically designed for PFAS removal, such as:

  --Granular activated carbon

  --Reverse osmosis