

PFAS Fact Sheet

August 2023

Introduction

The Greene County Sanitary Engineering Department (GCSED) operates and maintains the water facilities for the majority of Greene County. In 2020, we provided more than two billion gallons of treated, high-quality drinking water to our 18,000 water customers.

GCSED has been providing clean and reliable drinking water for 45 years. It is a responsibility we take very seriously. With that, comes the need to meet regulatory standards, such as a new proposal from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) that addresses PFAS nationwide.

PFAS and Drinking Water

PFAS are a large family of man-made compounds. They are per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances more commonly referred to as "PFAS." PFAS have been widely used since the 1950s in many household products such as non-stick cookware, waterproof fabrics, stain resistant products, food packaging, skin lotions and cosmetics. PFAS have also been used in firefighting foams at military sites and fire training facilities. They are heat resistant, oil resistant and water resistant – all useful properties. Unfortunately, these same properties also mean they persist in the environment. This is why they are often referred to as "forever chemicals."

Across the nation, PFAS are problematic because they have been detected in drinking water, soil, groundwater and even some foods. They are presently classified by USEPA as "contaminants of emerging concern," meaning that research into the harm they may cause to human health is still ongoing.

PFAS can enter drinking water at sites where they are made, used, disposed of, or accidentally released.

USEPA is Taking Action to Address PFAS

In June 2022, the USEPA issued new lifetime health advisory (LHA) levels to manage the risk for four PFAS known to be detected in drinking water. Through this proposed rule, USEPA plans to provide a nationwide, health-protective level for these specific PFAS in drinking water.

Most recently, in March 2023, USEPA announced the proposed National Primary Drinking Water Regulation. If finalized, the proposal would require public water systems to monitor for six PFAS contaminants in drinking water,

notify consumers if levels are found in exceedance of the Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs), and reduce the levels of these PFAS in drinking water if they exceed the proposed standards. USEPA is expected to finalize this regulation by the end of 2023 or early 2024.

Greene County Hard at Work to Meet Proposed PFAS Rules and Action Levels

GCSED has been actively involved in the emerging PFAS situation for several years. We voluntarily performed additional PFAS sampling in 2020 that went above and beyond the sampling performed by Ohio EPA. Samples were collected from seven of our water systems, as shown in the table below. Samples collected from Greene County owned and operated facilities were non-detect for PFAS. Samples collected from water systems where we purchase water from a neighboring utility (wholesaler) had some low level detections of some PFAS compounds.

GCSED is working to implement two capital improvement projects that will reduce our dependency on outside water wholesalers that have PFAS in their water. See back page for more information about these projects.

GCSED Water System	Greene County Water	Wholesaler Sourced Water	Sample Result
Clyo		•	Low-level detection
Dayton		•	Low-level detection
Eastern Regional	•		No PFAS
Fairborn		•	No PFAS
Kitridge		•	Low-level detection
Northwest Regional	•		No PFAS
Southwest Regional	•		No PFAS

Frequently Asked Questions

Is my water safe to drink?

Yes. GCSED has and will continue to meet the quality standards to ensure that it is free from harmful contaminants and pathogens for our 18,000 water customers. For more information about your drinking water, please visit www.greenecountyohio.gov/938/Water-Quality-Reports.

How will I know if my water has PFAS?

In 2020, all seven GCSED water systems were tested for PFAS. Low level detections of some PFAS compounds were detected in the water we purchase and distribute from wholesale sources, as shown in the table on page 1. Please view your account information if you have questions about which water system serves your property at <https://apps.greenecountyohio.gov/SanWaterSource/>.

When will GCSED sample for PFAS again?

The future PFAS sampling schedule will depend on the USEPA's final regulations. GCSED will comply with all state and federal monitoring requirements and expects to conduct PFAS sampling quarterly.

Do Brita water filters or other systems prevent PFAS?

According to their website, Brita® filters are certified to reduce chlorine taste and odor. Some of their filters also reduce health contaminants such as copper, cadmium, mercury, and lead. They do not mention PFAS on their website.

What about plastic water bottles?

At this time, USEPA is not recommending bottled water as an alternative based solely on concentrations of these chemicals in drinking water that exceed the health advisory levels.

Can PFAS be boiled out of my water?

No. The USEPA reports these chemicals cannot be removed by heating or boiling water.

Will bathing/showering with my tap water cause a health risk?

According to the USEPA, studies have shown that only a small amount of PFAS can get into your body through skin. That means neither bathing nor showering are likely to be primary routes of PFAS exposure.



Am I being exposed to PFAS?

According to the Centers for Disease Control, most people in the U.S. have been exposed to some PFAS because these substances have been used for more than 70 years in many common household products.

Greene County Reduces Dependency on Outside Water Sources Through Capital Projects

GCSED has begun an improvement initiative called "Greene Forward." Two capital improvement projects, as mentioned on page 1, are part of Greene Forward and will reduce our dependency on wholesale water that has had low level detections of PFAS. These projects involve expanding our capacity and increasing the size of our water mains to serve those areas that are currently served by neighboring water utilities, with the exception of our Kitridge system. This will allow us to deliver Greene County sourced water from our Northwest Regional plant, which is non-detect for PFAS, to these areas. Both projects are expected to be complete in the summer of 2024.

If you would like to learn about these and other capital improvement projects, please check out our website www.greeneforward.com.

GCSED has been and will continue to collaborate closely with Ohio and USEPA to monitor our drinking water and meet the PFAS regulations, once approved. We are proud of our clean, safe and reliable drinking water and look forward to serving our customers for decades to come.

Contact Information & Other Resources

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www.greenecountyohio.gov/317/Sanitary-Engineering

Additional PFAS Resources

To learn more about PFAS, please visit the following websites:

- **U.S. EPA:** <https://www.epa.gov/pfas>
- **Ohio EPA:** <https://epa.ohio.gov/monitor-pollution/pollution-issues/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>
- **American Water Works Association:** <https://www.awwa.org/Resources-Tools/Resource-Topics/PFAS>



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