



Dear City of Des Plaines Water Customer,

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) recently tested our water suppliers, the City of Evanston Water Utility, for compounds known as Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS). This notification serves to inform you that PFAS have been measured within the water supply. The water is safe to drink and does not require any remediation by the consumer or water supplier at this time. This is part of a standard statewide investigation of community water supplies. Evanston is the wholesale water supplier for the Northwest Water Commission and subsequently the communities of Arlington Heights, Buffalo Grove, Palatine, Wheeling and Des Plaines. PFAS are a group of thousands of manmade substances that have been produced in the United States since the 1940s and utilized for a variety of applications ranging from water and stain-proofing to firefighting. Some PFAS have been phased out of production due to environmental and human health concerns, yet they persist in the environment and may contaminate surface and ground waters.

Neither the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) nor the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) have yet developed enforceable drinking water standards for PFAS. In the interim, the IEPA has developed health-based guidance levels for the small number of PFAS for which there is appropriate information to do so. The health-based guidance levels are intended to be protective of all people consuming the water over a lifetime of exposure. It is important to understand that health-based guidance levels are not regulatory limits for drinking water. Rather, the health-based guidance levels are benchmarks against which sampling results are compared to determine if additional investigation or other response action is necessary.

The IEPA testing has determined that one or more PFAS were detected in the Evanston water system at values greater than or equal to the Illinois EPA health-based guidance levels, as provided in the table below.

PFAS Analyte	Acronym	Health-Based Guidance Level (ng/L)	Analytical Results (ng/L)
Perfluorobutanesulfonic acid	PFBS	2,100	Not Detected
Perfluorohexanesulfonic acid	PFHxS	140	Not Detected
Perfluorononanoic acid	PFNA	21	Not Detected
Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid	PFOS	14	2.4
Perfluorooctanoic acid	PFOA	2	2.3
Perfluorohexanoic acid	PFHxA	560,000	Not Detected
Hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid	HFPO-DA	560	Not Detected

**These results are reported in part per trillion. As a point of reference, 1 part per trillion is equivalent to a drop of water in 20 Olympic-sized swimming pools. The health-based guidance levels are 70 ppt for USEPA and 2 ppt for IEPA.**

Evanston's water may contain other PFAS at concentrations greater than or equal to the lowest concentration the laboratory can reliably detect, known as the minimum reporting level. However, neither the IEPA nor the USEPA currently have health-based guidance levels for these additional compounds. Results can also be found on the PFAS Investigation Network Interactive Map webpage: <https://illinois-epa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/d304b513b53941c4bc1be2c2730e75cf>.

PFAS are present in many consumer goods, including food packaging and personal care products, and scientists have found values of PFAS in blood of nearly all individuals tested. Exposure to high levels of PFAS may cause adverse health effects such as increased cholesterol levels, increased risk for thyroid disease, low infant birth weights, reduced response to vaccines, pregnancy-induced hypertension and increased risk of liver and kidney cancer as seen in studies of laboratory animals. Exposure to PFAS above the recommended health-based guidance levels does not necessarily mean that a person will get sick or an adverse health effect will occur. Health-based guidance levels are conservative estimates. The possible health effects from PFAS are dependent on how much a person is exposed to and how long they are exposed to it. Exposure to PFAS above recommended health-based guidance levels for periods of time may mean that a person is at a greater risk of experiencing these adverse effects.

City of Des Plaines has taken measures to respond to the results of this testing. As a proactive measure(s) to protect our drinking water supply, the City of Des Plaines is working to:

- carry out any site-specific response actions
- when requested by the IEPA, monitor PFAS values through quarterly sampling within their municipality
- identify which water source intake/well is affected if possible-only applies to Evanston
- isolate the affected water source intake to reduce levels if possible- only applies to Evanston

Based on these initial results, the City of Des Plaines will perform sampling when requested to do so by the USEPA and/or IEPA and will keep the community updated and informed. The City of Des Plaines realizes as a wholesale customer of Evanston that sampling by our City will, at some point in the near future be required. These samples will be analyzed for PFAS.

Additional information regarding PFAS, the statewide PFAS investigation network, and the impact to public health can be found on the IEPA PFAS webpage: <https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/water-quality/pfas/Pages/default.aspx>.

The confirmed sampling results for the City of Evanston are also available on Illinois EPA's Drinking Water Watch system at <http://water.epa.state.il.us/dww/index.jsp>.

## NEXT STEPS

The City of Evanston is committed to following the recommendations of the IEPA and closely monitoring the latest health-based guidance. They will continue to monitor PFAS values through quarterly sampling at the direction of the IEPA. The results of these samples will be reported on the chart on the Evanston PFAS webpage once available.

The Evanston Water Utility will begin evaluating treatment options to reduce public exposure to PFAS in potable water provided by the Evanston Water Utility. Evanston will continue to closely monitor the

situation and ensure information is communicated with both their community members as well as wholesale customers such as the City of Des Plaines.

Based on the results of the samples collected so far, Evanston sampled again in January and these results will be reported as soon as they are available.

If you have questions, please contact:

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If you would like to learn more about PFAs please see the attached information courtesy of the City of Evanston Water Utility.

<https://www.cityofevanston.org/government/departments/public-works/public-outreach/historical-pfsa-results>