



## **IMPORTANTE !**

**“Este informe contiene información muy importante. Tradúscalo o hable con un amigo quien lo entienda bien.”**

# **NOTICE OF REVISIONS TO DRINKING WATER HEALTH ADVISORY LEVELS**

## **Westfield Public Drinking Water System**

### ***What happened?***

On May 19<sup>th</sup>, United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a new lifetime Health Advisory of 0.070 ug/L (70 parts per trillion) for Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS). These values were reduced from 0.40 ug/L (400 parts per trillion) for PFOA and 0.20 ug/L (200 parts per trillion) for PFOS to reflect new scientific data on potential health effects. In situations where both chemicals are present in drinking water, EPA recommends that the levels be added together and not exceed 0.070 ug/L (70 parts per trillion). EPA lifetime Health Advisories are recommended contaminant levels in drinking water, set to be protective against adverse health effects for all people consuming the water for a lifetime. For PFOS and PFOA, EPA recommends that the lifetime Health Advisory also apply to shorter-term exposures of weeks to months during pregnancy and breast-feeding.

In 2013, PFOA and PFOS were detected at concentrations below the previous provisional Health Advisory in Westfield’s Well #7. Well #7 is one of nine well and surface water sources that can contribute to Westfield’s drinking water. Well #7 is not currently in use, except for sampling, and was last routinely used in December 2015. Westfield Water Resources’ other well and surface water sources (other than Well #8) were sampled at the same time as Well #7 and those sources did not contain PFOA or PFOS above the previous or revised Health Advisory. Well #8, for which test results are not yet available, is also not currently in use, except for sampling.

In light of the new EPA Health Advisory, the Westfield Department of Public Works - Water Division, in consultation with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), has determined that the samples taken in 2013 by the Westfield Water Division exceed the new EPA lifetime health advisory and we need to notify you of this new information, update you on what it means and what we are doing about it.

### ***What are PFOA and PFOS?***

PFOA and PFOS are fluorinated organic chemicals that are part of a larger group of chemicals referred to as perfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs). PFOA and PFOS have been the most extensively produced and studied of these chemicals. They have been used to make carpets, clothing, fabrics for furniture, paper packaging for food and other materials (e.g., cookware) that are resistant to water, grease or stains. They are also used for firefighter training, fighting oil and gas fires, including at airfields, and in a number of industrial processes. Because these chemicals have been used in an array of consumer products, most people have been exposed to them.

Between 2000 and 2002, PFOS was voluntarily phased-out of production in the U.S. by its primary manufacturer. In 2006, eight major companies voluntarily agreed to phase out their global production of PFOA and PFOA-related chemicals, although there are a limited number of ongoing uses. Scientists have found PFOA and PFOS in the blood of nearly all the people they tested, but these studies show that the levels of PFOA and PFOS in blood have been decreasing.

While consumer products and food are a large source of exposure to these chemicals for most people, drinking water can be an additional source in the small percentage of communities where these chemicals have contaminated water supplies. Such contamination is typically localized and associated with a specific facility, for example, an industrial facility where these chemicals were produced or used to manufacture other products or an airfield at which they were used for firefighting.

***What are the potential adverse health effects with exposure to PFOS and PFOA?***

The toxicity of PFOA, PFOS and other related chemicals is being actively researched. EPA's Health Advisory values were based on recent studies of PFOA and PFOS in laboratory animals and were also informed by studies of exposed people. Overall, these studies indicate that exposure to sufficiently elevated levels of PFOA and PFOS may cause developmental effects in fetuses during pregnancy and in breastfed infants. At higher levels of exposure, effects on the thyroid, the liver, the blood system, the immune system, and elevated rates of some types of cancers, were sometimes observed in adults.

EPA has lowered the Health Advisory values for PFOA and PFOS to reflect new toxicity information and states that they were set at levels that offer a margin of protection against adverse effects in the most sensitive people: the fetus during pregnancy and infants. The Health Advisory values are also protective of adults. It is important to note that consuming water with PFOA and PFOS above the Health Advisory level does not mean that adverse effects will occur. The degree of risk depends on the level of the chemicals and the duration of exposure. The Health Advisory assumes that individuals drink only contaminated water and are also exposed to PFOS/PFOA from sources beyond drinking water, such as food. Several uncertainty factors are additionally applied to account for the differences between animals and humans and the differences from one human to another human.

***What should you do?***

- **You do not need to do anything at this time as the water meets the new EPA Health Advisory. This is because both Well #7 and Well #8 are offline and are not being used.** (Note that well #8 is located near Well #7 and was recently tested for PFOA & PFOS but test results are not yet available).
- If you have specific health concerns regarding your past exposure, you should consult a health professional, such as your doctor.

***What is your public water supplier doing?***

The Westfield Department of Public Works - Water Division has taken the following actions:

- Because the 2013 sample results for PFOA and PFOS exceed the new May 19, 2016 Health Advisory of 0.070 ug/L in Westfield's Well #7, we are providing you this notice. PFOA and PFOS were detected at 0.043 ug/L and 0.16 ug/L, respectively, in a sample collected on February 27, 2013. PFOS was detected at 0.12 ug/L in a sample collected on August 19, 2013.
- **Well #7 and Well #8 will remain out of service, until approved for use by MassDEP.**
- The Westfield Water System Well #7 has been out of service since December 17, 2015, except for being run during monthly sampling events.
- The Westfield Water System Well #8 has been out of service since January 20, 2016, except for being run during monthly sampling events.
- During each past sampling event, 10,000 to 50,000 gallons of water entered the distribution system. Going forward, water from Wells #7 and #8 will no longer enter the distribution system during sampling events, and will be run to waste. Well #8 is proximate to Well #7, both are located near the Barnes Air National Guard Base.

- Westfield Water Division's other well and surface water sources (other than Well #8) were sampled at the same time as Well #7 and those sources did not contain PFOA or PFOS above the previous or the new Health Advisory.
- Without Well #7 and Well #8, we currently have approved drinking water sources which provide 9 million gallons per day of water. The 2015 maximum day usage was 8.7 million gallons so we anticipate that we will have sufficient quantities of water with Well #7 and Well #8 offline.
- We intend to use the treatment system for Well #2 to ensure sufficient disinfection of the water in areas normally supplied by Well #7 and Well #8.
- We will continue to sample our water sources for PFOA and PFOS.
- We are investigating treatment options for possible future use of Well #7 and Well #8.
- Prior to Well #7 and/or Well #8 being returned to use, public notice will be provided, which will include additional sample results for PFOA and PFOS and an explanation of treatment or other actions taken to support the return of Well #7 and/or Well #8 to service.
- When additional information becomes available this public notice will be updated.

For additional information on PFOA and PFOS see:

EPA's Drinking Water Health Advisories for PFOS and PFOA can be found at: <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/drinking-water-health-advisories-pfoa-and-pfos> and

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Public Health Statement for PFOS and PFOA can be found at: <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/phs/phs.asp?id=1115&tid=237> and

For additional information on possible health effects you may contact the Massachusetts Department Environmental Protection, Office of Research and Standards at 617-556-1165.

For more information, please contact Water Systems Engineer Charles Darling at 413-572-6270, email address [c.darling@cityofwestfield.org](mailto:c.darling@cityofwestfield.org), or mailing address 28 Sackett Street, Westfield, MA 01085.

You may also contact Joseph Rouse, Westfield Health Director at 413-572-6212 and Francis Cain, Assistant Director of Public Works at 413-642-9324

*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, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.*

This notice is being sent to you by:  
Westfield Department of Public Works  
Water Division

PWS ID#:  
1329000

Date distributed:  
May 27, 2016