



# BOROUGH OF HOPEWELL

88 East Broad Street  
Hopewell, NJ 08525  
Tel: 609-466-2636 Fax: 609-466-8511  
[www.hopewellboro-nj.us](http://www.hopewellboro-nj.us)

February 1, 2023  
Community Update No. 2

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

### Hopewell Borough Water System Has Levels of Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid (PFOS) Above a Drinking Water Standard

On July 7, 2022, the Hopewell Borough Water Department received a "Notice of Non-Compliance" from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) due to an exceedance of the drinking water standard for Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid (PFOS) in our water system. On August 5, 2022, we sent a notice to inform you, as our customer, of what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with an update on our progress.

Our Water Department is owned by Hopewell Borough and is licensed and regulated by the NJDEP. Approximately 40 to 50% of our water comes from Borough Well No. 4 (located on Louellen St.), and the rest is purchased through an interconnection with New Jersey American Water (NJAW). The exceedance of the PFOS drinking water standard was detected in a water sample collected from Well No. 4.

We routinely monitor our water for the presence of federal and state regulated drinking water contaminants. In June of 2020, New Jersey adopted a Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for PFOS of 0.013 micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ ) (equivalent to 13 parts per trillion). As required by the NJDEP, we monitor PFOS in our water system on a quarterly schedule and submit the laboratory results to the NJDEP. Compliance with the MCL is determined during each quarter based on a running annual average (RAA) of the four most recent quarterly monitoring results.

On July 7, 2022, we received notice from the NJDEP that the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter (April) 2022 RAA for PFOS in Well No. 4 was 0.014  $\mu\text{g/L}$ , which exceeded the MCL by 0.001  $\mu\text{g/L}$  (1 part per trillion). The April 2022 RAA was based on the average of the monitoring results from the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters 2021 and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quarters 2022. This is the only time that RAA for PFOS in Well No. 4 has ever exceeded the MCL since we began monitoring for this compound in January of 2019.

All subsequent PFOS monitoring results from Well No. 4 have met the MCL (samples collected during July and October of 2022 and January of 2023). **Therefore, our water system currently complies with all state and federal Drinking Water Standards.** While individual quarterly PFOS sampling results typically exhibit slight seasonal fluctuations, they do not show an increase in concentration over time.

### WHAT IS PFOS?

PFOS is a one of a group of man-made chemicals called per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) that have been widely used in industrial and commercial applications since the 1930s. PFOS is used in metal plating and finishing operations as well as in various commercial products and in aqueous film-forming foams for firefighting and training. PFOS is also found in many common consumer products such as grease resistant paper, fast food containers/wrappers, microwave popcorn bags, pizza boxes, candy wrappers, personal care products (shampoo, dental floss), cosmetics (nail polish, eye makeup), stain-resistant coatings for upholstery and carpets, and water-resistant outdoor clothing, as well as paints, varnishes and sealants. Major sources of PFOS in drinking water include discharges from industrial facilities where it was made or used, and the release of aqueous film-forming foam.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Levels of PFOS Above a Drinking Water Standard – Community Update No. 2

Hopewell Borough NJ Water System ID# 1105001

Page 2 of 4

February 1, 2023

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), since 2002, production and use of PFOS and PFOA in the United States has declined, but “Most PFAS (including PFOA and PFOS) do not break down, so they remain in the environment. Because of their widespread use and their persistence in the environment, PFAS are found in the blood of people and animals all over the world and are present at low levels in a variety of food products and in the environment. Some PFAS can build up in people and animals with repeated exposure over time.”

PFAS compounds are widespread in New Jersey. Since monitoring for these compounds began in 2019, the NJDEP has identified PFAS compounds above MCLs in at least 95 other community water supplies in New Jersey. Sampling results available from the NJDEP for public water supply wells located in Hopewell Township, Pennington, Rocky Hill, Flemington, Delaware Township, East Amwell, West Amwell, and Lawrenceville showed PFAS compounds above MCLs in 35% of the wells, and all wells contained detectable levels of PFAS. These results, together with a recent study reporting comparable PFAS concentrations in rainwater throughout the United States<sup>1</sup>, suggest that the PFOS detected in Hopewell Well No. 4 is the result of regional environmental contamination.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

*\*People who drink water containing PFOS in excess of the MCL over time could experience problems with their immune system, kidney, liver, or endocrine system. For females, drinking water containing PFOS in excess of the MCL over time may cause developmental effects and problems with the immune system, liver, or endocrine system in a fetus and/or an infant. Some of these developmental effects may persist through childhood.*

\* For specific health information please see

[https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/pfas\\_drinking%20water.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/pfas_drinking%20water.pdf).

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- *If you have specific health concerns, a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at higher risk than other individuals and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water.*
- *The New Jersey Department of Health advises that infant formula and other beverages for infants, such as juice, should be prepared with bottled water when PFOS is elevated in drinking water.*
- *Pregnant, nursing, and women considering having children may choose to use bottled water for drinking and cooking to reduce exposure to PFOS.*
- *Other people may also choose to use bottled water for drinking and cooking to reduce exposure to PFOS or a home water filter that is certified to reduce levels of PFOS. Home water treatment devices are available that can reduce levels of PFOS. For more specific information regarding the effectiveness of home water filters for reducing PFOS, visit the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) International website, <https://www.nsf.org/consumer-resources/articles/home-water-treatment>.*
- Boiling your water will not remove PFOS.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ian T. Cousins et al. 2022. Outside the Safe Operating Space of a New Planetary Boundary for Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS). Environ. Sci. Technol. 2022, 56, 16, 11172–11179, August 2, 2022.  
<https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acs.est.2c02765?ref=pdf>

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER**

Levels of PFOS Above a Drinking Water Standard – Community Update No. 2

Hopewell Borough NJ Water System ID# 1105001

Page 3 of 4

February 1, 2023

For more information, please see <https://www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/pdf/pfoa-pfos-faq.pdf>.

### **WHAT ARE WE DOING?**

Hopewell Borough is implementing the following corrective actions:

1. Continued quarterly PFOS monitoring and reporting to the NJDEP.
2. Updated public notification letters will be sent to all customers every 3 months until the NJDEP determines that the April 2022 PFOS non-compliance issue has been fully resolved.
3. We continue to evaluate all options to ensure that our water system remains in compliance with state and federal Drinking Water Standards and to minimize the cost to our customers. Those options include the installation of a treatment system at Well No. 4 and the possible sale of our water system to a private water utility. Under a sale scenario, the utility would assume responsibility for implementing a remedial solution for PFOS using their assets and resources.
4. Our water-supply expert (M<sup>2</sup> Associates, Inc.) and our Borough Engineering team (Ferriero Engineering) have developed a concept plan and a preliminary cost estimate for a PFOS treatment system for Well No. 4. We anticipate that the plans could be finalized, approved by the NJDEP, and implemented relatively quickly if needed, as they are based on treatment systems that are already in place at other New Jersey municipalities. We have also identified potential state and federal grant sources to reduce the cost of a PFOS treatment system to our customers, if installed.
5. If the Borough decides to move forward with installation of the proposed treatment system, we will apply for the required state (NJDEP) and local permits for construction of the system, prepare bid specifications, and solicit public bids from qualified contractors for its construction. Once all required permits have been issued and funding has been secured, we will proceed with the construction and installation of the PFOS treatment system. Upon completion of the construction, we will then apply for a "Permit to Operate" from the NJDEP Bureau of Safe Drinking Water and initiate operation of system upon receipt of NJDEP permit approval.
6. The decision-making process concerning the possible sale of our water system will include numerous opportunities for public input and will be based on an analysis of the long-term costs and benefits to our community, the fiscal health of our town, and a projected rate impact for our customers. The analysis will be thorough. We have performed an inventory of the physical assets in our water system as an initial step. The next step will be to arrange for an independent engineering appraisal of those assets, so we know their value in relation to the current and anticipated debt service for the Water Department. The results of that appraisal will be critical in determining the feasibility of a system sale.
7. If the Borough determines that the sale of our water system is the best option for our community, we will suspend the final design and installation of the treatment system and commence steps toward the sale, in accordance with all statutory requirements. We will present the results of the independent appraisal and financial analysis to the public and solicit community input through public hearings, and possibly through a public referendum. If, based on the results of that public process, the Borough decides to sell our water system, we will have the option of purchasing additional water from our interconnection with NJAW on a short-term basis, if needed to ensure compliance with the PFOS MCL until the sale is concluded.

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER**

Levels of PFOS Above a Drinking Water Standard – Community Update No. 2

Hopewell Borough NJ Water System ID# 1105001

Page 4 of 4

February 1, 2023

We anticipate implementing a solution within 1 year of the date of the NJDEP Notice of Non-Compliance (by July 7, 2023).

### **WHO CAN I CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS?**

If you have questions concerning the PFOS or any other questions concerning our water supply, please contact us by telephone or email at the addresses provided below:

*\*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 the Borough of Hopewell Water Department. State Water System ID#: 1105001.**

Date distributed: February 1, 2023

#### **Contact Information:**

**David Misiolek**  
Department Director  
Hopewell Borough Water Department  
609-466-0168  
[david.misiolek@hopewellboro-nj.us](mailto:david.misiolek@hopewellboro-nj.us)

**Michele Hovan**  
Borough Administrator  
Hopewell Borough  
(609) 466-2636  
[michele.hovan@hopewellboro-nj.us](mailto:michele.hovan@hopewellboro-nj.us)

**Devangi Patel**  
Health Officer  
Montgomery Township Health Dept.  
(908) 533-9331  
[dpatel@montgomerynj.gov](mailto:dpatel@montgomerynj.gov)