



NEWS

Aqua PA gets \$3.9M in state funds for PFAS treatment in Montgomery County

More about PFAS

Chris Ullery, Bucks County Courier Times

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Story Highlights

This news organization has been investigating and writing extensively on the topic, telling the stories of local people who believe they've been sickened by the chemicals, speaking with health experts on the potential toxicity of the chemicals, and examining the actions taken by local, state and federal agencies as they address the contamination. As a public service, this content is available to subscribers and nonsubscribers. View our unwell water frequently asked questions and other stories at www.buckscountycouriertimes.com and www.theintell.com.

Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc. is getting a \$3.9 million state-funded loan for equipment related to ongoing PFAS remediation in Montgomery County.

The loan through the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority, or PENNVEST, is part of a \$181 million statewide funding program for 16 water infrastructure projects across 12 counties, a news release from Gov. Tom Wolf's office states.

The project in Montgomery County includes upgrading a chemical treatment system and installing other equipment to address "potential health hazards in the raw water supply" testing under a federal limit for the unregulated chemicals.

In 2016, the Environmental Protection Agency set a lifetime health advisory limit of 70 parts per trillion for a family of the perfluoroalkyl substances commonly known as PFAS.

The limit led to a mass shuttering of public and private drinking water wells in Bucks and Montgomery counties soon after due PFAS levels far exceeding the EPA limit.

Horsham, Warminster and Warrington townships were among the hardest hit communities in the nation, with some wells testing several hundred times higher than the limit.

More: PFAS grant window for area businesses closes Sept. 1

More: Researchers to test over 1,000 in Bucks, Montco PFAS study

More: Does PFAS exposure make you more vulnerable to coronavirus? Senators want a study to find out

The contamination was linked to firefighting foams used for decades at nearby former and active military bases.

The military has agreed to compensate residents for clean-up costs in areas testing over the EPA limit, but not under it.

Officials at nearly every level of government have been in negotiations with the military to cover the remaining costs since the wells were closed.

Until those negotiations are finished, projects like the one Aqua PA received the loan for are being funded through state programs or by ratepayers.

The PENNVEST loan for Aqua PA comes from the Pennsylvania's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, a low-interest loan program aimed at helping water providers meet state and national drinking water requirements.

No Bucks County projects were included in Wednesday's announcement of this round of funding and the Aqua PA loan was the only PFAS-related project announced.