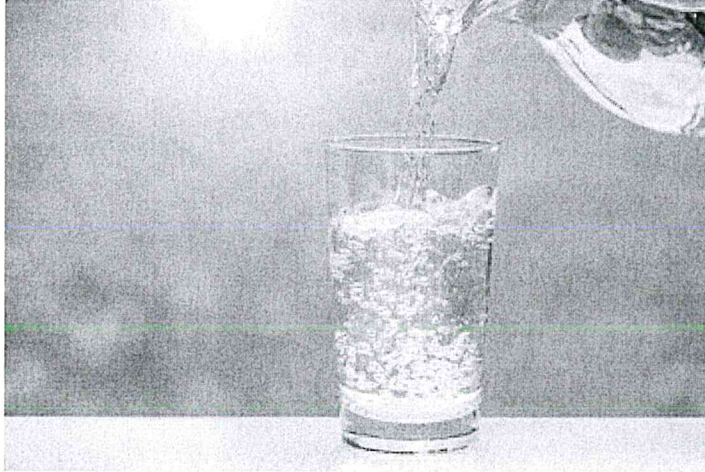


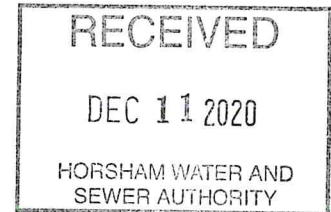
More Steps to Be Taken Against PFAS in Drinking Water

By Lisa Whitley Coleman Dec 9, 2020 Chemicals

The EPA continues to make addressing per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the environment a top priority. In its latest announcement, the Agency revealed two new steps in its aggressive battle to mitigate PFAS in drinking water.



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“First, EPA issued a memorandum detailing an interim National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting strategy for addressing PFAS in EPA-issued wastewater permits,” according to an Agency press release. “Second, EPA released information on progress in developing new analytical methods to test for PFAS compounds in wastewater and other environmental media. Together, these actions help ensure that federally enforceable wastewater monitoring for PFAS can begin as soon as validated analytical methods are finalized.”

The interim approach applies to areas where the EPA is the permitting authority on NPDES permits and includes three states (Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New Mexico); the District of Columbia; most U.S. territories, including Puerto Rico; Indian Country; and certain federal facilities. In these areas, permit writers are advised to include “PFAS monitoring at facilities where these chemicals are expected to be present in wastewater discharges, including from municipal separate storm sewer systems and industrial stormwater permits,” according to the EPA.

The recommendation applies to PFAS that have “validated EPA analytical methods for wastewater testing,” which the EPA will continue to make available as they are finalized. “The agency’s interim strategy also encourages the use of best management practices where appropriate to control or abate the discharge of PFAS and includes recommendations to facilitate information sharing to foster adoption of best practices across states and localities,” according to the Agency.

“Better understanding and addressing PFAS is a top priority for EPA, and the agency is continuing to develop needed research and policies,” said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. “For the first time in EPA’s history, we are utilizing all of our program offices to address a singular, cross-cutting contaminant and the agency’s efforts are critical to supporting our state and local partners.”

“Managing and mitigating PFAS in water is a priority for the Office of Water as we continue our focus on meeting 21st century challenges,” said EPA Assistant Administrator for Water David Ross. “These actions mark important steps in developing the underlying science and permitting techniques to address PFAS in wastewater where the discharge of these chemicals may be of concern.”

The Agency announced it will release a list of 40 PFAS chemicals for which it is developing an analytical method in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Defense. The new analytical method will be in addition to Methods 533 and 537.1, which are already approved and measure 29 PFAS in drinking water.

The EPA expects to finalize multilab validated testing in 2021.

For more information on testing method validation, see <https://www.epa.gov/cwa-methods>.

See the EPA PFAS website for more information on PFAS.