



**AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

August 18, 2022
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PFAS Community Update

Bennington and North Bennington

EPA has Modified their PFOA/PFOS Health Advisory Values

The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) received notice from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on June 15, 2022, of a change in their Drinking Water Health Advisory Values for PFOA and PFOS.

The previous EPA values set in 2016 were 70 nanograms per liter (ng/l, or part per trillion (ppt)). The updated EPA interim Health Advisory levels are 0.004 parts per trillion (ppt) for PFOA and 0.02 ppt for PFOS. These levels can't be detected in water using current technologies. EPA set these values based on an updated evaluation of health information since 2016. As a reminder, the DEC current regulatory level is 20ppt.

In the short term, this change in the EPA Health Advisory will have no impact on actions occurring in Bennington and North Bennington in response to the release of PFOA from the former Chemfab facility. Actions to be taken are driven by the Consent Order agreed to between the State of Vermont and Saint-Gobain and filed with the Bennington County Superior Court in 2019.

That agreement dictated that actions taken by Saint-Gobain and overseen by the State of Vermont to protect public health is related to the Vermont "applicable Regulatory Standard." Currently the Vermont Groundwater Enforcement Standards (Regulatory Standard) for the sum of five Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) is 20 ppt. The five PFAS are PFOA, PFOS, PFHxS, PFHpA, and PFNA (all similar perfluoro substances with slightly different chemical structures).

This Regulatory Standard is based on the current Vermont Health Advisory. The Vermont Department of Health (VDH) is reviewing all of the information used by the EPA to set the interim Health Advisory, this process takes time. If the VDH determines that a new Vermont Health Advisory for PFAS is warranted, then the DEC can update the Regulatory Standard in the applicable groundwater protection and drinking water rules.

However, even though the State of Vermont cannot require Saint-Gobain to take additional actions in wells where PFOA has been detected above the laboratory detection limit but below 20 ppt for the sum of the 5 PFAS regulated in Vermont, there are interim steps citizens in Bennington and North Bennington can take to limit their exposure to lower levels of PFOA should they wish. These steps include:

- Purchasing and consuming bottled water. Although drinking water is the

primary exposure to PFOA, other measures could include cooking, brushing teeth, and making ice cubes;

- Installing and keeping up to date a point-of-entry (entire home) or point-of-use treatment system (one faucet/tap) at your residence. Point-of-use systems may be carbon based or reverse osmosis systems;
- Ensuring you limit your consumption of untreated water coming into your home from your water supply.

The DEC would like to reiterate that the community water system for both Bennington and North Bennington are routinely sampled for PFAS, and laboratory results have shown non-detect levels. In other words, all indications are that the **water in the public water systems are free of PFAS and safe to drink**. The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation will continue to update you on this and other matters with further updates as they become available.

For More Information

- To find out more about Vermont's PFAS sampling plan and information for affected communities, visit the DEC [PFOA webpage](#).
- For more information about health and PFAS in drinking water, visit the Health Department's [website](#).

You are receiving this e-mail because you have requested to be updated on Vermont's PFOA response efforts, or because your well was recently sampled. If you wish to stop receiving these updates, you may unsubscribe at any time using the link at the bottom of this e-mail.

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