MDC CUSTOMER NOTICE

EPA to Announce First-Ever Comprehensive Nationwide PFAS (Polyfluoroalkyl substances) Action Plan

PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid) and PFOS (perfluorooctanesulfonic acid) are just two of a much larger group of man-made organic chemicals that make up a group of chemicals known as polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs). PFOA and PFOS have been the most extensively produced and studied of these organic chemicals which were used to make carpets, stain resistant clothing, and furniture fabrics; and paper packaging for food and cookware (Teflon) that was resistant to water, grease or stains. The chemicals were also used as an ingredient for firefighting foam at airports (military and civilian) in addition to a number of other industrial processes. Between 2000 and 2006 the primary manufacturers of these compounds in the United States voluntarily agreed to phase out the production of PFOA and PFOS compounds by 2015.

In 2016 the EPA set a health advisory level of 70 parts per trillion for the combined concentration of the two compounds, PFOA and PFOS, based upon the available peer reviewed studies of the health effects of the compounds. At this time there is not a national primary drinking water regulation nor is there a requirement to routinely monitor for the PFAS group of chemicals, although the MDC did monitor for PFOS and PFOA (and some related compounds) as part of the Unregulated Contaminant Rule (UCMR 3) during 2013–2014. Results of the UCMR3 monitoring can be found on the publically available National Contaminant Occurrence Data (NCOD) (https://www.epa.gov/dwucmr/occurrence-data-unregulated-contaminant-monitoring-rule#3).

During the monitoring period, quarterly samples were collected from sample points representative of the drinking water entering the MDC’s distribution system and were then delivered to an EPA certified laboratory for analysis. Results of the MDC monitoring program can be viewed using the link above, though at no time were any of the 6 tested compounds detected in the water samples.

The MDC is currently conducting an assessment of possible sites within the MDC protected and publicly owned watershed areas which might have had PFAS compounds used on those sites sometime in the past. Because the MDC has maintained a vigilant and aggressive watershed protection program and owns large buffer areas around much of our larger source water reservoirs, the possibility of these compounds being found near a health advisory level is unlikely. Additionally, unlike most other states, Connecticut prohibits the use of water which has received direct discharges from sewer treatment plants from being used as a drinking water source.

MDC takes water quality very seriously, and remains committed to providing our customers with the highest quality potable water through source protection and treatment followed by compliance monitoring and reporting of analytical results. For more information regarding MDC’s water quality, please visit: http://themdc.org/what-we-do/drinking-water/water-quality.