

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) has begun a statewide initiative to test drinking water from all schools that use well water and community water supplies. The test is looking for a group of manmade chemicals called per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). MDEQ is taking this precautionary step of testing these drinking water sources to determine if public health actions are needed.

It is not uncommon to find low levels of PFAS in drinking water supplies, as PFAS can be found in fire-fighting foams, stain repellants, nonstick cookware, waterproof clothing, food wrappers, and many other household products. They do not break down in the environment and move easily into water.

The EPA set an LHA (lifetime health advisory) level for two PFAS in drinking water, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS). The LHA level is 70 parts per trillion (ppt, equal to 70 ng/L) for PFOA and PFOS combined, or individually if only one is present. The EPA has not set health advisory levels for other PFAS compounds. The State of Michigan is using 70 ppt for decision making purposes.

Lake Township Water System was tested by AECOM, MDEQ's contractor. The test results can be found on the Michigan PFAS Action Response Team website, www.michigan.gov/pfasresponse. Three samples were collected. The first one collected was from the Lake Michigan (Influent) source water. This sample showed non detect. The second and third samples were collected from the water plant finished water tap (effluent). One of those showed non detect and the other one showed a result of 2.0 parts per trillion. The difference between the results of these two samples is because of the testing methodology used. This is within the margin of accuracy using this methodology. The level is below the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) lifetime health advisory (LHA).

Lake Township Water System is committed to providing our customers with quality drinking water. As your water supplier, we work closely with the MDEQ to maintain the quality of your water.

For health related questions, contact the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) at 1-800-648-6942 or visit one of the websites below.

For information on PFAS including possible health outcomes, visit these websites:

- State of Michigan PFAS Action Response Team (MPART) website serving as the main resource for public information on PFAS contamination in Michigan www.michigan.gov/pfasresponse
- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ASTDR) website including health information, exposure, and links to additional resources www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) website including basic information, U.S. EPA actions, and links to informational resources www.epa.gov/pfas

If you have any further questions, please feel free to give me a call at 269-465-3850.

Jeff Burkhard
Superintendent of Lake Township Water System