

On April 10, 2024, EPA announced the National Primary Drinking Water Regulation (NPDWR) for six PFAS: PFOA, PFOS, PFBS, GenX, perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), and perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS). The NPDWR includes Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) of 4.0 parts per trillion for PFOA, 4.0 parts per trillion for PFOS, 10 parts per trillion for GenX, 10 parts per trillion for PFNA, 10 parts per trillion for PFHxS, and a unitless Hazard Index level for 4 PFAS (PFBS, GenX, PFNA and PFHxS). Regulated public water systems have three years (by 2027) to complete their initial monitoring for these chemicals. Systems must include their results in their Annual Water Quality reports to customers. Systems that detect PFAS above the new standards will have five years to reduce PFAS in their drinking water (by 2029). More details on the NPDWR can be found at EPA's website, <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>.

Summerville has been performing PFAS sampling and reporting results to Georgia EPD since 2020, after the EPD notified Summerville that levels of PFOA and PFOS in the Summerville drinking water supply exceeded combined lifetime health advisory limits of 70 parts per trillion that were in place at that time. Summerville notified the public as directed by EPD and took emergency action to reduce the levels of PFOA and PFOS to under 70 parts per trillion. Summerville installed Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) in its existing filter beds at the Raccoon Creek treatment plant and the EPD ultimately allowed Summerville to lift drinking water restrictions.

Since 2020, Summerville has continued to use and replace GAC in existing filter beds as approved by Georgia EPD. While the GAC in the filter beds was successful in complying with the health advisory limits in place in 2020, the GAC in the filter beds will not allow Summerville to meet the new 2024 NPDWR MCLs for PFOA and PFOS, which become effective in 2029. Levels of PFOA and PFOS in the water that the City draws from Raccoon Creek consistently exceed the new MCL limits of 4 parts per trillion for PFOA and PFOS and, depending on rain fall, test results have shown levels for these PFAS individually exceeding 30 parts per trillion.

At a special called City Council meeting on September 23, 2024, the City of Summerville voted to accept and approve its engineers' recommendations that Summerville move forward with the design of new permanent filtration improvements that will allow Summerville to meet the new MCLs and remove PFAS from the water supply. The long term, permanent solution will involve more robust and improved GAC filtration by way of pressurized vessels large enough to allow more GAC to filter the water drawn from Raccoon Creek in order to reduce PFAS levels to non-detect. The City's approval of its engineers' recommendations will ensure that the City will be able to meet the deadlines for compliance set forth in the April 2024 regulations and ensure long term compliance with the new MCLs and the removal of PFAS from the drinking waters supply.

The City continues to pursue its litigation against the chemical companies responsible for the PFAS contamination of the water supply, just as other City's have done in Georgia and other states impacted by PFAS contamination. It remains the City's goal to recover all capital costs and increased operational costs from those responsible so that the costs of improving the water system to remove PFAS is not passed onto residents.

In addition to the USEPA website referenced above, additional information regarding PFAS is available at <https://epd.georgia.gov/pfas-info>