



For Immediate Release  
April 10, 2024

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## **Delaware Riverkeeper Network Statement EPA adoption of PFAS safe drinking water regulations**

Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN) wholeheartedly supports the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) regulatory action to require the removal of per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) from drinking water nationwide. The EPA announced today the final adoption of National Primary Drinking Water Regulations for six PFAS compounds. A maximum contaminant level (MCL) for PFOA of 4 ppt, for PFOS of 4 ppt and 10 ppt for each of four other PFAS— PFNA, PFHxS, PFBS, and GenX chemicals (HFPO-DA), are based on the most recent science after a public rulemaking process. PFNA, PFHxS, PFBS, and GenX chemicals (HFPO-DA) will also be regulated as mixtures through a hazard index at a combined concentration of 4 ppt. For more technical details and facts about the rule and the dangers and known health effects of PFAS exposure see EPA's link here: <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>.

"This is an historic adoption of safe drinking water standards for some of the most dangerous and frequently found "forever chemicals" that have plagued communities for decades—in some cases, generations. This is the first adoption of new MCLs by the federal government since 1996 and marks an enormous accomplishment for the people who have been impacted by PFAS and those who have fought so long and hard to get much-needed protection from these highly toxic compounds. Delaware Riverkeeper Network commends EPA for finally bringing this strict and science-based rule across the finish line. People have the right to safe drinking water and, with this federal rule, equal protection will soon be provided to all who rely on public water supplies in every state in the nation," **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

**A promise realized.** In 2020, then-candidates Joe Biden and Kamala Harris [promised](#) in their [Plan to Secure Environmental Justice](#) to set a drinking water standard for PFAS as part of the Biden-Harris plan to secure environmental justice. The benefits and the costs of adoption of these MCLs were calculated as required by law and EPA deemed the benefits to outweigh the costs. Included in the benefits, despite the impossible task of fixing a price on human life, is the saving of thousands of lives and prevention of tens of thousands of illnesses, including protection of our most vulnerable populations—infants and young children.

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**All of us should be protected from PFAS, regardless of where we live.** It is essential that all people are equally protected from these highly toxic “forever chemicals”. In the absence of federal primary drinking water standards, states have been leading the regulation of PFAS with at least 10 states adopting PFAS MCLs in recent years, including New Jersey (the first to do so in the nation— for PFNA), Pennsylvania, and New York in the Delaware River Watershed. These state standards have provided the removal of certain PFAS compounds from drinking water and since the treatment systems are in place and supporting infrastructure is functioning, each are in an advantageous position to quickly and efficiently implement the EPA rule.

**Expanded protection needed for private water well users.** The MCLs apply to public water supply systems, which is where most people get their water. However, individually owned private water wells are also impacted by PFAS. The EPA announced that of the \$9 Billion that will be provided for PFAS monitoring and treatment systems, \$1B is earmarked for private water wells under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. EPA stated that another \$12 billion in federal funds is being made available for broader water supply improvements. The Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act grant funds for underserved and small and disadvantaged communities are also being made available to pay for PFAS monitoring and treatment systems. States must work to assure these funds are accessible to those dependent on private water wells. In PA, for example, nearly one third of the state’s residents rely on private water wells.

**Swift implementation needed.** DRN objects to the excessively long five year implementation period and urges each state to move as quickly as possible to implement the most protective safe drinking water standards. All three Delaware River Watershed states will be required to lower their adopted state standards to meet the stricter MCL adopted today by EPA.<sup>1</sup> These states and others with MCLs in place should be ready to meet the new standards immediately. States without any PFAS MCLs will now be required to adopt and implement them. Those states can benefit from the experience of those who do, sharing laboratories and treatment technologies that are readily available nationally. With the adoption of the federal standards, clean water justice will finally be realized for the entire nation and it can be accomplished swiftly if states step up, especially considering the billions in funding.

**More action required.** This is only the beginning of needed action to remove thousands of “forever chemicals” from our drinking water and to clean up the sources of pollution from our environment, making those who released the pollution pay and stand accountable. PFAS compounds continue to be spread into the environment, our air and our water supplies, contaminating food and fishlife and building up in peoples’ blood, due to their persistence in the environment and the continued use of PFAS chemicals and their precursors. But this monumental step today by EPA, while too late in coming for those who have been harmed, is one that is essential towards a goal of providing people across our nation with safe drinking water.

For more information on DRN’s 19 years of work on PFAS:

<https://www.delawareriverkeeper.org/ongoing-issues/perfluorooctanoic-acid>

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<sup>1</sup> PA: [https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/My-Water/drinking\\_water/PFAS/Pages/DEP-Involvement.aspx](https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/My-Water/drinking_water/PFAS/Pages/DEP-Involvement.aspx)

NY: [https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/docs/water\\_supplier\\_fact\\_sheet\\_new\\_mcls.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/docs/water_supplier_fact_sheet_new_mcls.pdf)

NJ: <https://dep.nj.gov/dsr/pfas/>