

A Message from the City Manager Regarding PFAS in Our Drinking Water

Dear Wood River Residents,

Within the next few days, you will be receiving a notice regarding PFAS in the City's water. I understand that receiving a notice about PFAS in our drinking water can understandably cause concern. As your City Manager, I want to provide some perspective and, most importantly, assure you that the City of Wood River is taking this matter seriously and is actively working toward a long-term solution.

Recent testing detected perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) at 6.7 parts per trillion (ppt) in our water. The Illinois standard for PFOS is 4 ppt.

While this result is above the applicable standard and therefore requires notification, it is important to put the number into perspective. We are talking about 6.7 parts per trillion, an extremely small concentration. The fact that a test result is above a regulatory standard does not mean that our residents are experiencing an immediate health emergency. Rather, these standards provide a level at which communities are required to take action and evaluate appropriate measures to reduce exposure.

Wood River is already taking those steps.

The City has been proactive in addressing PFAS and preparing for the future. We have been conducting a PFAS treatment pilot study specifically to help determine what treatment technology will work best for our water system. This is an important step because our goal is not simply to install a treatment system, we want to make sure we select a system that is effective, reliable, and appropriate for Wood River for years to come.

In addition, the City is actively participating in litigation involving PFAS manufacturers and other responsible parties. Through that process, the City has received funding that will help support future treatment and other costs associated with addressing PFAS in our water system.

These efforts mean that Wood River is not starting from scratch. We have identified the issue, we are monitoring it, we are studying treatment options, and we have resources available to help us address it.

We will continue working with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, our water professionals, and our legal and engineering partners to understand the results, comply with all applicable requirements, and develop the most effective long-term treatment solution for our community.

PFAS is a complicated issue facing communities across Illinois and the country. The science, regulations, and treatment technologies continue to evolve. Our responsibility is to stay

informed, follow the science, and make thoughtful decisions that protect the long-term quality and reliability of Wood River's water supply.

I also want residents to know that we will not minimize this issue, but neither should anyone panic because of this notification. We are addressing it responsibly, methodically, and with the long-term interests of our community in mind.

Providing safe and reliable drinking water is one of the most important responsibilities of local government. We understand the trust you place in us every time you turn on your faucet, and we take that responsibility very seriously.

We will continue to communicate openly with our residents as additional information becomes available and as we move forward with our treatment planning.

Thank you for your continued trust in the City of Wood River.

Sincerely,

Steve Palen
City Manager
City of Wood River, Illinois