



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Agencies respond to the Town of Centre Water Works and Sewer Board's recent elevated perfluorinated compounds (PFCs) levels

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) continue to coordinate with the Centre Water Works and Sewer Board to monitor for two PFCs, perfluorooctane sulfate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), in the community's local water system. This monitoring has been taking place since May 2016 as a result of an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) health advisory.

As a result of the monitoring, ADPH has been notified that the average of the combined concentrations of PFOA and PFOS has exceeded the lifetime exposure health advisory number of 70 parts per trillion (ppt). The Centre Water and Sewer Board has been monitoring the sampling results and due to this exceedance of the lifetime health advisory they have begun purchasing water from the Cherokee County Water Authority to blend with their water in an effort to lower the PFC numbers. Continued weekly testing will verify if the blending efforts are effective. Meanwhile other options such as installation of a granulated activated carbon system are being considered.

State Toxicologist Dr. John Guarisco, ADPH, states, "The health department, in coordination with ADEM, continues monitoring the situation and providing information regarding the EPA health advisory and recent reported levels." Dr. Guarisco reminds affected consumers that the EPA advisory suggests that sensitive populations such as pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and formula-fed infants served by the identified water system consider using alternate sources of drinking water. Other people served by this system may also consider these steps.

EPA defines PFCs as a diverse group of compounds resistant to heat, water and oil. For decades, they have been used in hundreds of industrial applications and consumer products such as carpeting, apparel, upholstery, food paper wrappings, firefighting foams and metal plating. PFCs have been found at very low levels both in the environment and in the blood samples of the general U.S. population.

As additional monitoring data become available, ADEM will provide that information to ADPH for appropriate recommendations, and will continue to make the data available on its publicly accessible eFile system.

Any questions regarding health-related matters should be directed to ADPH at (334) 206-5971, and any questions regarding monitoring should be directed to ADEM at (334) 271-7955.

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