August 29, 2023 – PRESS RELEASE

Drinking Water PFAS Rules – Recent WDNR Evaluation Changes

Wausau Water Works has been and continues to manage and monitor PFAS levels in our drinking water. The City established a goal of keeping the PFAS levels in drinking water less than 20 ppt combined of PFOA/PFOS suggested by WI Department of Health Services (WDHS) in 2022 and our interim treatment process continues to meet this goal.

Recently the WI Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) notified the City they are now monitoring additional PFAS compounds as suggested by WDHS. These additional PFAS compounds (FOSA, NEtFOSA, NEtFOSAA, NEtFOSE) are now being added to the overall goal of staying below 20 ppt.

Now that the WDNR is requesting reporting on the additional four PFAS compounds, a recent City sample test was slightly above the WDHS suggested limit of 20 ppt -- at 22.7 ppt. The City has retested and our most recent result is a total of 11.9 ppt including the additional compounds now being monitored, well under the 20ppt.

These new additions to be included in the overall total number will continue to be monitored moving forward and we continue to monitor our test results against the proposed USEPA rule, which is different than what WDNR is monitoring. Any required formal notice by the WDNR will be forthcoming as required but it is important the public understands these changing rules, our testing results, and our unwavering commitment of reducing PFAS in drinking water to non-detectable levels.

Wausau Water Works continues to test more frequently than required and will be monitoring these new additions of PFAS compounds. Our interim strategy of managing PFAS continues to work well and lower PFAS levels in our drinking water. Our long-term strategy for PFAS removal using Granule Activated Carbon is still on schedule for completion in late 2024.

Once the USEPA finalizes their proposed PFAS drinking water standard the WDNR will use the USEPA PFAS standard and not use WDHS suggested rules which are significantly different. We know this may be confusing and we are continuing to move forward and keep track of all the different rule makings and requirements from various agencies.