



Gadsden Water Provides Update on Reverse Osmosis Treatment Facility

GW providing its update as EPA announces new drinking water standards for some PFAS

Gadsden, Alabama, April 10, 2024: Today, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) announced Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCL) for specific per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), for all the nation's water systems that will become effective in five years. Gadsden Water currently complies with all effective regulations.

The newly announced MCLs are: four parts per trillion (4 ppt) for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), and ten parts per trillion each for perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), perfluorohexane sulfonate (PFHxS), and hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid (HFPO-DA also known as GenX). There is also a Hazard Index for a mixture of at least two of the following PFAS: PFNA, PFHxS, HFPO-DA, and perfluorobutane sulfonate (PFBS) with a total of 1. (This is not parts per trillion, billion, or million. It's a sum of the fractions of levels found for each compound.)

The Board's continued efforts to eliminate these manmade chemicals from the drinking water has well-positioned Gadsden Water to meet these standards well before they become effective.

Gadsden Water's customers should be aware that in 2018, Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) vessels were added as advanced treatment to reduce concentrations of PFAS in the drinking water. In 2022, the Board made the decision to construct what will be the State of Alabama's largest Reverse Osmosis (RO) treatment facility, which is considered to be the industry's best available technology for water treatment.

The Board followed-up on that decision and hired InSite Engineering (InSite) to design, bid, and oversee the construction of the RO facility. Since that time, InSite has completed Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) required pilot testing and has completed the treatment flow process.

InSite is currently on the brink of bidding the required RO equipment and all related components, which will enable Gadsden Water to construct the new RO facility as efficiently and expeditiously as possible.

In addition, Gadsden Water will also utilize a scheduled filter media exchange in June 2024 to include replacing the current filter media with GAC. This is another immediate action Gadsden Water is taking to further reduce PFAS concentrations from its drinking water prior to the construction of the RO facility.

“All the decisions, evaluations, and overall preparation for this monumental undertaking, which continue today, have positioned Gadsden Water to meet EPA’s new standards well before they become effective,” said Chad Hare, General Manager of Gadsden Water. “We’ve still got work to do. However, I am pleased with the progress we’ve made. It reflects our continued commitment of providing our customers with water that does not just meet regulations but exceeds them.”