

Village of Waterloo

PRESS RELEASE

The Seneca County Department of Health was recently informed by the Village of Waterloo that recent testing of its source water detected the presence of two PFASs (per or poly fluoroalkyl substances). Although duplicate samples taken in September of 2019 showed detectable levels of PFOA (at 1.36 and 1.24 nanograms) and PFHxS (at 2.79 and 2.83 nanograms) levels were found to be well below the EPA's allowable limit of 70 parts per trillion (nanograms).

The EPA's action levels for PFASs are based on studies that indicated an association between the exposure to PFOA & PFOS in concentrations above 70ppt may result in adverse health effects to developing fetuses, breastfed infants, to the development of cancer, and could cause liver effects and changes in cholesterol levels.

Tom Scoles, Principal Sanitarian for the Seneca County Health Department stated that in response to concerns for PFASs in water systems, the New York State Department of Health is currently in process of establishing its own allowable limits for PFOA and PFOS in the water system at 10ppt (parts per trillion) for both compounds. Scoles also acknowledged that NYS's proposed allowable levels will be much lower than the EPA's current allowable level of 70 ppt.

Jim Bromka, Chief Operator, for the Village of Waterloo - Water Treatment Plant (WTP) facility stated that the proposed NYS regulations requiring quarterly testing for PFASs will be continued on a regular basis in advance of the anticipated changes, along with the necessary testing for potential algal toxins when such producing algal blooms are identified on Seneca Lake. The additional monitoring will assist the Village in determining the extent of the contamination and can guide decisions regarding treatment systems that will be most beneficial to treat the water supply.

Further, Village Mayor, Jack O'Connor, stated that the Village will continue to aggressively pursue the funding needed for the purchase of a granular-activated carbon (GAC) system to add to its current WTP Capital Project, which is in progress. The GAC system has been found to reliably remove both HABs and PFAS substances. The Mayor stated that this is a tremendous opportunity to get out in front of any potential future water quality problems by using existing property taxes in a cost efficient manner. All it takes is the desire to work together.