



Orange Water and Sewer Authority

Our community's trusted partner for clean water and environmental protection

Clear Waters: Navigating your PFAS Questions and Concerns

July 25, 2024

Thank you for your interest in how OWASA is addressing PFAS in our community's water. Our goal is to connect with our community and become partners with you in understanding and addressing PFAS in our drinking water, wastewater, and biosolids. With this quarterly newsletter, we hope to keep you well-informed of our research and design of new treatment facilities, as well as regulations that affect how we manage your drinking water and wastewater treatment.

Join us for Community Chats! Safeguarding Our Water: PFAS Q&A

Our first PFAS community chat was held on June 27 at the Chapel Hill Public Library. OWASA hosted a panel of experts in environmental law, water infrastructure, and finance and members of the community to discuss how to pay for PFAS removal from drinking water. Panelists also answered questions from the community about lawsuits against PFAS manufacturers, increasing rates across communities, and loans and grants from the state. You can watch the full event on our [YouTube channel](#).



Please join us for our next PFAS community chat on Tuesday July 30 at 6:30 p.m. at Lanza's Café in Carrboro. The topic will be the science and technology behind removing PFAS from drinking water, featuring an expert panel of scientists and engineers from UNC-Chapel Hill's Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, Black and Veatch, and OWASA's capital projects team. Refreshments will be served. More [event details](#) are available on our website at [owasa.org](#).

Eagle Eye on PFAS: Second Quarter Monitoring Results

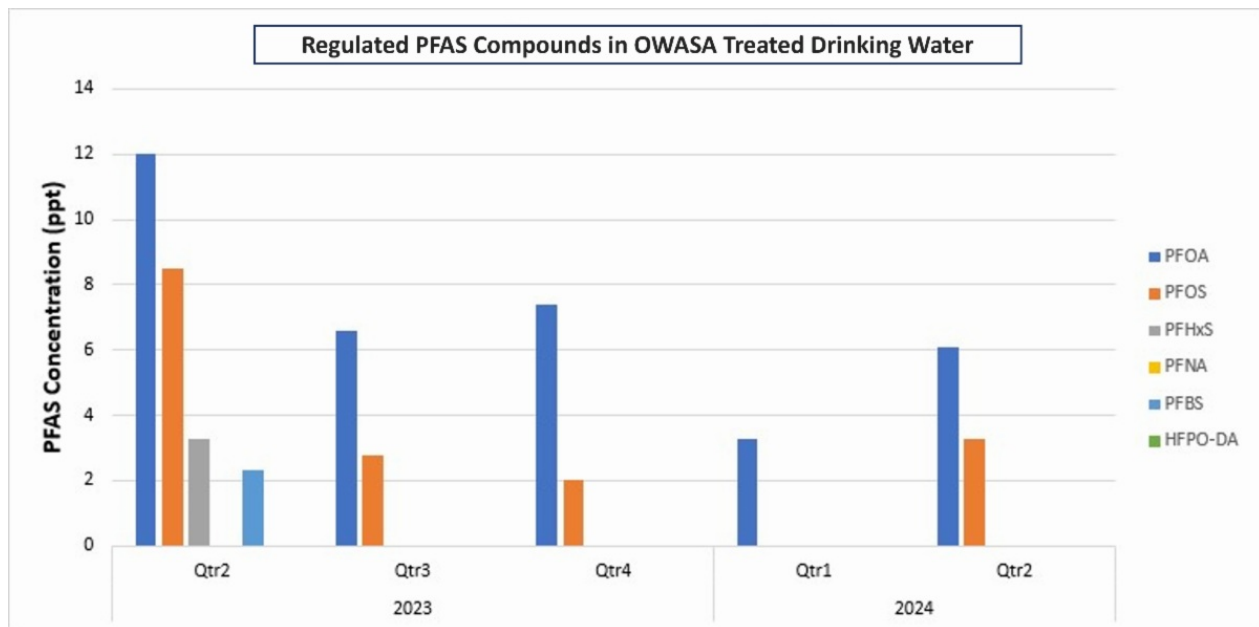
Our drinking water monitoring results for the second quarter of 2024 are now available on our online information hub, [PFAS & Your Water](#). Our most recent monitoring data, tested during the second quarter of 2024, detected PFOA at 6.1 parts per trillion (ppt) and PFOS at 3.3 ppt in our finished drinking water. The EPA's new Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for both PFOA and PFOS, established in April of this year, is 4 ppt. PFHxS and PFBS were not detected during the second quarter sampling but have been detected at low levels in

PFAS & Your Water: Drinking Water Monitoring & Treatment
How much PFAS is in our community's drinking water?

Our PFAS compounds are the focus of the EPA's regulations on PFAS in drinking water. Our most recent monitoring data, completed during the second quarter of 2024, detected PFOA at 6.1 ppt and PFOS at 3.3 ppt in our finished drinking water. PFHxS and PFBS were not detected during second quarter sampling but have been detected in the past. PFPO-C8A (Gen-X) and PFNA have never been detected in our treated drinking water. Maximum, minimum, and average values detected of these six PFAS compounds in drinking water since 2018 are:

PFAS	Minimum Value Detected 2018-2024	Maximum Value Detected 2018-2024	Average Values Detected 2018-2024	EPA Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCL)
PFOA	Non-detect	24.0 ppt	12.1 ppt	4 ppt
PFOS	Non-detect	15.0 ppt	6.0 ppt	4 ppt
PFHxS	Non-detect	6.0 ppt	2.6 ppt	10 ppt
PFNA	Non-detect	Non-detect	Non-detect	10 ppt

the past. HFPO-DA (Gen-X) and PFNA have never been detected in our treated drinking water.



Please note: PFAS compounds are measured in parts per trillion (ppt). Where columns are not visible for the quarter in the graph above, the associated compound was not detected during sampling for that quarter.

Now Pilot Testing: PFAS-Reduction Technology

Part of our drinking water treatment process—Powdered Activated Carbon (PAC)—is removing a lot of PFAS from water—but it is not removing enough to allow us to meet our goal: delivering the highest quality drinking water we can to our community and meeting regulatory requirements. Meeting this goal is going to require a major addition to our water treatment plant, specifically to reduce PFAS.

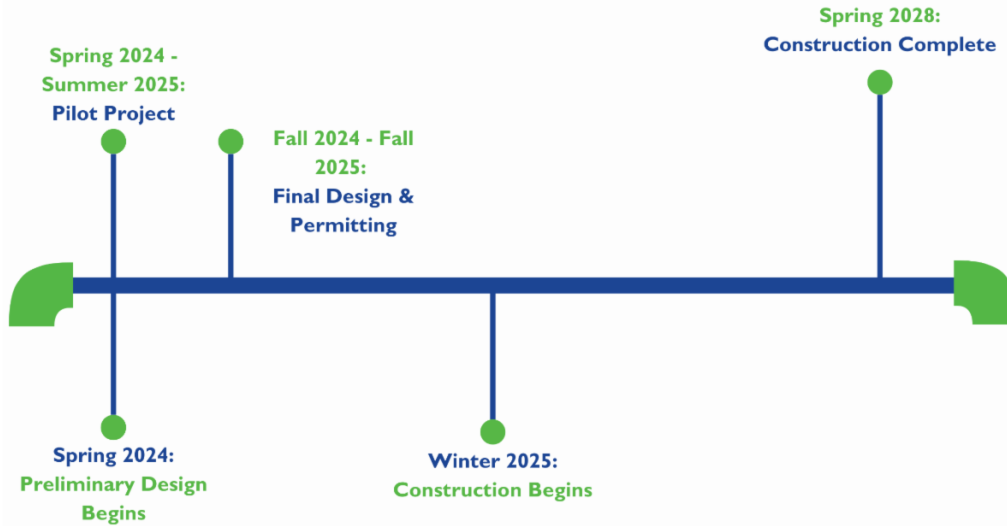
Our PFAS treatment pilot project launched in May and will continue through June 2025. We are currently evaluating Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) and Ion Exchange (IX) treatment to see which treatment or combination of treatments remove PFAS most effectively from our source water. Phase 1 of the pilot project is focused on gathering information to determine the best PFAS removal technology for OWASA by testing these two technologies under different conditions and combinations. Phase 2 will begin in August this year and continue through June 2025. In this phase, we will observe how changes in the water throughout the year affect the system so that we can better estimate how much it will cost to run and maintain it.



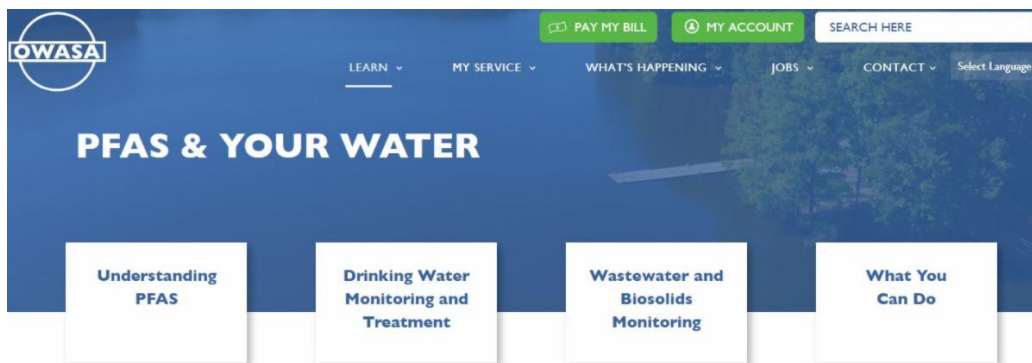
Next Steps: A New PFAS Treatment Facility

Now that the pilot testing of PFAS removal technology for our drinking water is well underway, we have begun to lay out OWASA's PFAS treatment facility. While the size of the facility and its exact location is yet to be determined, we know it will be a major addition to our Jones Ferry Road campus. Paired with construction of a new finished water storage tank, you will notice a lot of changes to our Jones Ferry Road footprint over the next few years. We will keep you well-informed as the work progresses.

OWASA PFAS Construction Timeline



Click below to visit our "PFAS & Your Water" information hub:



PFAS & Your Water

PFAS, short for per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances, are a group of compounds used in a variety of industrial processes and in everyday products to increase resistance to water, grease, and stains. PFAS can be found in carpet, clothing, furniture fabric, food packaging, cookware, some firefighting foams, and other materials. This family of compounds has been around for decades, accumulating in the environment—including drinking water sources. There is no known active industry in the watersheds that feed our reservoirs.

Our mission is to protect public health and the environment. Our dedication to doing what is best for our customers means we are following available science and new technology while ensuring we are making sound investments for our community's future. Our commitment to each of you is to share what we know and to move forward without delay to reduce PFAS in your water.

Thank you for keeping in touch with us on this important issue. Please reach out to us with questions related to this newsletter at info@owasa.org



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