Customer Information Regarding Per- and Polyfluorinated Alkyl Substances (PFAS)

What are PFAS?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of more than 4500 man-made chemicals that have been manufactured and used in a variety of industries since the 1940s. PFAS are resistant to heat, water, and oil, making them persistent in the environment.

Where can PFAS be Found?

Among other things, PFAS can be found in stain-resistant carpets and fabrics, non-stick cookware, fire-fighting foam, food (fast-food packaging), paints, and personal care products. People may be exposed to PFAS when they eat or drink contaminated food or liquid, breathe in contaminated air, or touch products containing PFAS.

Specific PFAS Chemicals to Know

Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonate acid (PFOS) are two of the most widely studied members of the PFAS group. Other PFAS that are gaining increasing attention include GenX chemicals(HFPO-DA), perfluorobutane sulfonate (PFBS), perfluorononionic acid (PFNA), and perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS). The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified these as contaminants of concern.

Regulatory Activity

State and federal regulators, including the EPA, have been taking steps to develop standards for the detection, public notification, and removal of PFAS in drinking water.

In April 2024, the EPA announced its federal PFAS Rule (Rule), which sets two different kinds of limits on a total of six different PFAS.

First, the Rule sets an individual maximum contaminant level (MCL) for each of the following PFAS: PFOA, PFOS, PFHxS, GenX and PFNA. An MCL is the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water under EPA regulation. These limits are in units of parts per trillion, or ppt.

The Rule then sets a different kind of MCL, called a Hazard Index, for any mixture of two or more of four PFAS chemicals—PFHxS, GenX, PFNA, and PFBS. The Hazard Index does not list any units because the Hazard Index is calculated as a ratio of the detected contaminants. The calculated limit for any mixture of two or more of these PFAS is 1. The table below shows the MCLs for the five PFAS with an individual limit, as well as the Hazard Index calculation formula.

Chemical	MCL
PFOA	4.0 ppt
PFOS	4.0 ppt
PFHxS	10 ppt
HFPO-DA (Gen X)	10 ppt
PFNA	10 ppt
Mixture of two or more: PFHxS, PFNA, Gen-X, and PFBS	Hazard Index of 1 (no units)= $\frac{\text{(GenX ppt)}}{\text{(10ppt)}} + \frac{\text{(PFBS ppt)}}{\text{(2000ppt)}} + \frac{\text{(PFNAppt)}}{\text{(10ppt)}} + \frac{\text{(PFHxS)}}{\text{(10ppt)}}$

With the finalization of the PFAS Rule, utilities have three years to comply with the testing, reporting, and notification aspects of the regulation. Utilities have five years to comply with meeting the MCLs. For utilities with affected sources, full compliance may require the installation of treatment facilities to remove PFAS from potable water sources. For more information, please visit: https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas

What is Liberty doing?

Liberty monitors its water sources for PFAS. Where possible, Liberty will develop a plan to comply with the new, more stringent requirements announced by the EPA.

Liberty is exploring infrastructure improvements to add treatment processes that remove PFAS from water, examining the impact this will have on the cost of delivering water to our customers, and identifying grants and other potential funding sources to help offset these necessary costs.