

Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

There is heightened concern regarding the presence of per and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), such as perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) contaminating drinking water supplies across the country. Recent news reports about PFAS in the upper (less than 20 feet) groundwater aquifer near the Adams Plating Superfund Site and adjacent RACER Trust locations (former General Motors Plants 2, 3 and 6) has increased inquiries among customers in our service area. The Lansing Board of Water & Light (BWL) draws water from the deeper Saginaw Aquifer, approximately 400 feet underground.

What is PFAS?

A group of man-made chemicals that includes PFOA, PFOS, GenX and many other chemicals. PFAS have been manufactured and used in a variety of industries around the globe, including the United States since the 1940s.

Where can PFAS be found?

PFAS have been used in non-stick cookware, water-repellent clothing, stain resistant fabrics and carpets, some cosmetics, some firefighting foams, and products that resist grease water and oil. PFAS can be found near areas where they are manufactured or where products containing PFAS are often used, such as Adam's Plating and Racer Trust. PFAS can travel long distances, move through soil, seep into groundwater or be carried through air.

How does PFAS get in my water?

PFAS is not natural. For many decades, Lansing was the heart of industry and the water supplies can be impacted by leakage, poor storage or inadequate industrial waste disposal practices.

Is PFAS in drinking water a concern?

There is still a great deal unknown about the health impacts of PFAS. Some studies have linked PFAS exposure to several negative health effects. The EPA has set a Lifetime Health Advisory level (LHA) for two PFAS in drinking water: perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) of 70 parts per trillion (ppt) for PFOA and PFOS combined. The LHA is the level, or amount, below which no harm is expected from these chemicals.

Is there PFAS in my water?

The BWL monitored for PFAS under the UCMR3 in 2015 and performed additional monitoring in 2018 and 2019; no PFAS was detected. *See table below for results.*

What are the steps the BWL has or is taking?

The BWL discussed the findings with the MDEQ and will continue to monitor our water conditioning plants annually due to potential contaminated sources in Lansing. Although we have not detected PFAS in our drinking water, based on the number of industrial sources in our area we feel it is important to continue to monitor the levels so that timely action can occur if needed.

For further information about PFAS, please visit:

DrinkTap: <https://drinktap.org/Water-Info/Whats-in-My-Water/Perfluorinated-Compounds>

MDEQ: <https://www.michigan.gov/pfasresponse/>

EPA: <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/epa-pfas-research>

CDC: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/index.html>

BWL PFAS (combined PFOS and PFOA) Results:

	Dye	Wise	Reporting Limit*	Units
Feb & Aug, 2015	Non-Detect	Non-Detect	60	ppt
March 2018	Non-Detect	Non-Detect	2	ppt
July 2018 (BWL)	Non-Detect	Non-Detect	2	ppt
July 2018 (MDEQ)	Non-Detect	Non-Detect	2	ppt
July 2019	Non-Detect	Non-Detect	2	ppt

*A **Reporting Limit** is the **limit** of detection for a specific target analyte.