



May 2, 2025

PFAS (Per-and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances) 2nd Update

In case you have concerns, here are some frequently asked questions and answers to clear things up regarding PFAS

All eight wells have detectable levels of PFAS but only wells 1 (Chaney) and 7(Elrose) have levels above the EPA's maximum contaminant limits (MCLs) of 4 to 10 parts per trillion. PFAS is not just one single component but made up of many different contaminants consisting of PFOA, PFOS, PFHxS, PFNA, and HFPO-DA or mixtures containing two or more of each. This final rule by the EPA established the following rules that each public water system must do and the City has and will be meeting these rules.

- Public water systems must monitor for these PFAS and have three years to complete initial monitoring (by 2027), followed by ongoing compliance monitoring. Water systems must also provide the public with information on the levels of these PFAS in their drinking water beginning in 2027.
- Public water systems have five years (by 2029) to implement solutions that reduce these PFAS if monitoring shows that drinking water levels exceed these MCLs.
- Beginning in five years (2029), public water systems that have PFAS in drinking water which violates one or more of these MCLs must take action to reduce levels of these PFAS in their drinking water and must provide notification to the public of the violation.

What the city has done to meet or exceed the rules established above:

The city undertook upgrades to six wells under EPA guidance that may help reduce the PFAS levels. Testing was done prior to the repairs in 2023 and in 2025 another set of tests will be completed so results can be compared with the 2023 tests, but even with the upgrades of the existing filter systems these systems are not designed to completely remove PFAS. To remove PFAS completely all wells will need to be upgraded with new and different type of water filtration systems.

Crest Hill is in the process of switching to treated Lake Michigan water, purchased from the City of Chicago Department of Water Management. The process of finding an alternative water supply started before the State of Illinois began testing community wells for PFAS, in 2020. The cause for the study was mainly due to environmentally sensitive areas which were restricting the locations in which the city could build wells and the City needs more water to keep up with growth, and also the shallow ground water was expected to increase in chlorides, mainly due to deicing operations on area roads. However, during the investigation it was discovered that PFAS was present in the wells, but below the regulatory standards at that time. They have since lowered the limits, in April 2024.



The study then added the treatment of PFAS into the analysis. By January 2022, with the study completed, PFAS was a major reason the city voted to join the Grand Prairie Water Commission and improve the water quality for the residents. The study showed that the probable cost to treat for PFAS, which would have taken several years to implement, was \$175,000,000 to \$190,000,000. The probable cost for Lake Michigan water, which will also take several years to implement, was found to be \$70,000,000 at the conclusion of this study but has been raised to \$120,000,00 in 2025. The finding of this study was presented to the public in 4 separate public meeting held in 2022 at Chaney/Monge School, Richland School, Carillion Lakes and the city's Public Works Facility and numerous city workshop and council meeting. Therefore, the city council decision to go to a new Lake Michigan Water Supply would address the reduction of PFAS to minimum detectable levels well below the limits set by the EPA and solve the water supply issue from diminished ground water wells.

There is extensive information about PFAS on the USEPA website site a link provided at the bottom PFAS Update posted on April 29, 2025, by the city. This link provides information on PFAS and how it got into our water supply, foods we eat and products used everyday. This same site provides information on ways to reduce exposure and home treatment options that will reduce further exposure and the possible health effects as are known today.

The city has been proactive in its response to PFAS since it was first notified of its detection in our shallow wells in 2021, we have determined that a new Lake Michigan Supply is the best option, the city is spending millions of dollars each year replacing or lining old water mains, the city has engaged in a lawsuit regarding PFAS and is trying to collect from the parties responsible to help offset the costs the city and its residents needs to pay to be compliant with the new USEPA guidelines on PFAS.