

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: July 16, 2020

Contact: Randy Black

General Manager

253-588-4423, rblack@lakewoodwater.org



Lakewood Water District Takes Next Steps in Response to PFAS

Lawsuit seeks to recover costs for PFAS water quality protection efforts.

Lakewood Water District filed suit today to recover costs related to ongoing water quality protection efforts in response to PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) in the District's groundwater supply. Defendants to the lawsuit are the US government and the manufacturers of firefighting foam containing PFAS.

The District has detected PFAS in groundwater at certain locations in the District's water supply system. PFAS are a group of human-made chemicals that have the potential to adversely affect human health and the environment. PFAS have been manufactured and used in the US and around the world since the 1950s, in food packaging, non-stick cookware, firefighting foam, and many other commercial household and workplace products.

Lakewood Water District is assuring customers it has taken, and continues to take, steps to protect water quality. "We want our customers to know the District's water continues to be safe to drink," says Randy Black, Lakewood Water's general manager.

The District's priority is to keep PFAS levels below the EPA's lifetime health advisory levels. The advisory levels offer protection for all people from adverse health effects for a lifetime of exposure to PFAS in drinking water.

"Ongoing testing allows us to monitor PFAS trends in the water supply and make plans to turn off or filter affected wells when levels approach or exceed the EPA's lifetime health advisory levels," Black explains. The District has also proactively invested in a new filtration system that removes PFAS from drinking water, and a second filtration system is currently in design.

"PFAS in the regional groundwater supply to the District's wells came from firefighting foam used and disposed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord. Filing this lawsuit is an important part of our plan to hold those responsible for manufacturing PFAS and for releasing PFAS to the environment accountable, and to control costs paid by District customers," explains Black.

The lawsuit seeks to recover current and future costs related to the District's water quality protection projects in response to PFAS. These costs include infrastructure upgrades, additional testing, attorneys' fees, and relief for any future actions needed to address PFAS contamination and continue to provide a safe and reliable water supply.

For more information on the response to PFAS and other actions taken by the Lakewood Water District, visit the website at <https://www.lakewoodwater.org/lwd/page/pfas-topics>.

###