

Public Statement

Freehold Borough has prepared this statement to clarify and correct an article posted to the Patch.com website on March 26th titled "5 Companies Did 'Extensive Contamination' Of Your NJ Water: DEP."

The article discusses efforts on the part of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to pursue five companies that are responsible for "extensive contamination" of drinking water throughout the state and require them to fund assessment and cleanup efforts. The contaminants in question are polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and the article reviews some of the health effects of these contaminants and notes that they have been linked to cancer and other health problems.

Unfortunately, a critical part of the article is inaccurate and very misleading. The article notes that the Environmental Working Group (EWG) "identified large utilities that accumulated or accrued the most violation points between October 2014 to September 2017 in New Jersey," and their list included Freehold Borough. Some readers may interpret this statement to mean that these violations are related to PFAS contamination. However, this is not true. As explained below, these two items are completely unrelated to each other.

A link is provided in the article to EWG's website, which allows readers to view EWG's drinking water report, which presents data from NJDEP and USEPA, for each of the state's large utilities (systems serving more than 10,000 people). This website clearly states that the Borough's water system is "in compliance with federal health-based drinking water standards." As noted in the most recent Consumer Confidence Report distributed by the Borough in 2018, the water delivered to Borough Water Utility customers meets or exceeds all NJDEP Safe Drinking Water regulations for finished water quality.

With regard to PFAS contamination, the Borough has conducted PFAS sampling as part of the last two rounds of the NJDEP's Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule sampling protocol. Past water quality sampling performed by the Borough has detected no PFAS contamination in Borough's water sources.

Although it has not received any violations related to finished water quality, the Borough, much like other large water utilities, has received a number of NJDEP violations that are related to monitoring and reporting. There were ten violations issued by NJDEP over the past five years. In the interest of complete transparency, the violations are summarized below along with an explanation as to why the violation was issued.

Violation #	Date	Summary Explanation
2017-7037	1/25/2017	Water quality results submitted late by laboratory
2014-6456	2/6/2014	Water quality results submitted late by laboratory
2018-1331	7/11/2018	Water quality results submitted late by laboratory
2018-1329	6/4/2018	Plan revision submitted to NJDEP past the due date
2018-1328	6/4/2018	Plan revision submitted to NJDEP past the due date
2018-1327	4/19/2018	Water quality results submitted late by laboratory
2018-1326	4/19/2018	Water quality results submitted late by laboratory
2018-1325	4/19/2018	Water quality results submitted late by laboratory
2017-1324	9/12/2017	Water quality results submitted late by laboratory
2016-1320	8/24/2016	CCR submitted late to NJDEP

The NJDEP violations listed in the table do not represent a public health concern and were issued due to laboratory results or documentation being submitted late. All of the violations were resolved in a timely fashion with NJDEP.

In summary, the Borough's water is safe. There are four important points that Borough residents should know about the Borough's water system:

1. The Borough's water sources do not have any PFAS contamination.
2. The Borough is in compliance with all state and federal drinking water quality standards.
3. The violations noted in the article are related to monitoring and reporting only and all have been resolved in a timely fashion with NJDEP.
4. None of the violations in question represent a public health concern.