



Columbia Community Water System
Attn: Bob Hill
208 South Rapp Avenue
Columbia, Illinois 62236

January 14, 2026

Right-to-Know Notice

Re: Bureau of Water ID: W1330050002
Columbia Community Water System
IL1330050 / Monroe County
Bureau of Water File Code 02A

Dear Bob Hill:

Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), a Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) compound, has been detected in the Dupo Community Water System (CWS) – which serves as an emergency connection to the Columbia CWS – at a concentration that exceeds the Illinois Class I groundwater quality standard established under 35 Illinois Administrative Code Part 620, adopted pursuant to the Illinois Environmental Protection Act and the Illinois Groundwater Protection Act:

- **PFAS Compound:** PFOS
- **Detected Level:** 4.5 parts per trillion
- **Groundwater Quality Standard:** 4 parts per trillion

While this emergency connection is not used under normal operating conditions, it is authorized for use if other drinking water sources become unavailable.

Within five (5) business days of receiving this letter, the owner or operator of the Columbia CWS must provide one of the following notifications to all residents and owners of premises connected to the Columbia CWS:

1. **A copy of both versions of the attached Public Health Notice** (English and Spanish) by first-class mail or by email; or
2. **Notification in a form approved by the Illinois EPA**, delivered by first-class postcard, text message, or telephone. If this option is selected, copies of the Public Health Notices must be included in the next water bill sent.



However, if the water bill is sent on a postcard, the Public Health Notices do not need to be included, provided that the postcard contains the internet address where the notices are posted on the Illinois EPA website:

<https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/drinking-water/public-water-users/notices.html>.

The front of the envelope or postcard for any notice shall carry the following text, in at least 18-point font: **PUBLIC HEALTH NOTICE - READ IMMEDIATELY.**

Notices sent to institutional residents, including, but not limited to, residents of school dormitories, nursing homes, and assisted care facilities, may be provided to the owners and operators of those institutions. Those owners or operators are then responsible for notifying their residents.

Within seven (7) calendar days of providing notification, proof that the notices have been sent must be submitted to the Illinois EPA. Acceptable proof includes photographs, postage or mailing receipts, or similar documentation. Proof of notification may be submitted by email to Jeff.Guy@illinois.gov or by mail to the Illinois EPA, Attention: Jeff Guy, Office of Community Relations, 2520 West Iles Avenue, P.O. Box 19276, Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276.

This notice is issued pursuant to the Environmental Protection Act [415 ILCS 5/25d-3(a)(2)(B)]. Failure to provide notification to all residents and owners of premises connected to your CWS, as required by 415 ILCS 5/25d-3(a)(2)(B), may result in a civil penalty of up to \$5.00 per connected premise for each day the violation continues [415 ILCS 5/42(b)(6)]. Furthermore, any person who knowingly makes a false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement to the Illinois EPA, whether orally or in writing, commits a Class 4 felony. A second or subsequent offense following conviction constitutes a Class 3 felony [415 ILCS 5/44(h)].

For questions or additional information, please contact Jeff Guy at the Illinois EPA Office of Community Relations by phone at (217) 785-8724 or by email at Jeff.Guy@illinois.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'James Jennings', with a stylized, flowing script.

James Jennings
Acting Director

Enclosures:
Public Health Notice (English)
Public Health Notice (Spanish)

PUBLIC HEALTH NOTICE – IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Why You're Receiving This Notice

Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), a Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) compound, has been detected in the Dupu Community Water System (CWS) at a level that exceeds the groundwater quality standard established by the State of Illinois. This system serves as an emergency connection to the Columbia CWS. Although this emergency connection is not used during normal operations, it is authorized for use if other drinking water sources become unavailable. This notice is required by law under the Illinois Environmental Protection Act and the Groundwater Protection Act. The information is summarized below:

- **PFAS Compound:** PFOS
- **Detected Level:** 4.5 parts per trillion
- **Illinois Standard:** 4 parts per trillion

What Are PFAS?

PFAS are human-made chemicals used since the 1940s. Because they repel oil and water and resist heat, they are commonly found in products such as non-stick cookware, food packaging, waterproof clothing, stain-resistant furniture, and firefighting foam. PFAS pollute water through spills, leaks, and disposal of products. They are often called “forever chemicals” because they remain in the environment for decades.

Health Risks

Long-term exposure to PFAS may increase the risk of:

- Fertility problems and high blood pressure during pregnancy
- Developmental impacts in children
- Certain cancers, including kidney, prostate, and testicular
- A weakened immune system
- Disruption to key hormonal systems, such as thyroid function, reproductive hormones, stress response, and metabolic regulation



Exposure does not guarantee health problems. Risk depends on the PFAS level and how long you've been exposed. Consult your healthcare provider for health concerns.

Reducing PFAS in Your Drinking Water

Boiling water does not remove PFAS, but certain water filters can reduce or remove them. With many filters on the market, it's important to choose one that is specifically certified to remove or reduce PFAS. Filters vary by type, brand, and installation method—such as pitcher filters, faucet-mounted units, or whole-home systems. Below are types of filters shown to effectively reduce or remove PFAS levels:

- **Charcoal (Granular Activated Carbon or GAC)** – traps chemicals as water flows through
- **Reverse Osmosis (RO) Systems** – filters out pollutants using a thin membrane
- **Ion Exchange Resins** –tiny beads that attract and hold contaminants

Check for Certification

Use filters that meet National Sanitation Foundation/American National Standards Institute (NSF/ANSI) standards, specifically NSF/ANSI 53 (for reducing health-related contaminants, including PFAS) or NSF/ANSI 58 (for reverse osmosis systems). You can verify certification at: <https://info.nsf.org/Certified/dwtu/>. Be sure to replace filters as directed by the manufacturer; failure to do so can increase PFAS exposure.

Questions?

Contact Jeff Guy, Illinois EPA Office of Community Relations:

☎ (217) 785-8724

✉ Jeff.Guy@illinois.gov

Learn More

Scan the QR code below to visit the Illinois EPA PFAS information page:

<https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/water-quality/pfas.html>



AVISO DE SALUD PÚBLICA – INFORMACIÓN IMPORTANTE SOBRE SU AGUA POTABLE

Por Qué Está Recibiendo Este Aviso

El ácido perfluorooctanosulfónico (PFOS), un compuesto de Sustancias Perfluoroalquiladas y Polifluoroalquiladas (PFAS), ha sido detectado en el Sistema de Agua Comunitario de Dupu a un nivel que supera el estándar de calidad del agua subterránea establecido por el Estado de Illinois. Este sistema funciona como una reserva (conexión) de emergencia para el sistema de agua comunitario de Colombia (Columbia CWS). Aunque esta conexión de emergencia no se utiliza bajo condiciones normales de operación, está autorizada para su uso si otras fuentes de agua potable dejan de estar disponibles. Este aviso es requerido por ley bajo la Ley de Protección Ambiental de Illinois y la Ley de Protección de Aguas Subterráneas. La información se resume a continuación:

- **Compuesto PFAS:** PFOS
- **Nivel Detectado:** 4.5 partes por billón
- **Estándar de Illinois:** 4 partes por billon

Qué Son las PFAS

Las PFAS son sustancias químicas creadas por el ser humano y utilizadas desde la década de 1940. Debido a que repelen el aceite y el agua y resisten el calor, se encuentran comúnmente en productos como utensilios de cocina antiadherentes, empaques de alimentos, ropa impermeable, muebles resistentes a manchas y espuma antiincendios. Las PFAS contaminan el agua a través de derrames, fugas y el desecho de productos. Normalmente se les llama “químicos eternos” porque permanecen en el ambiente durante décadas.

Riesgos para la Salud

La exposición prolongada a las PFAS puede aumentar el riesgo de:

- Problemas de fertilidad y hipertensión durante el embarazo
- Impactos en el desarrollo infantil
- Ciertos tipos de cáncer, incluyendo riñón, próstata y testicular
- Un sistema inmunológico debilitado
- Alteraciones en sistemas hormonales esenciales, como la función tiroidea, hormonas reproductivas, respuesta al estrés y regulación metabólica



La exposición no garantiza problemas de salud. El riesgo depende del nivel de PFAS y del tiempo de exposición. Consulte a su proveedor médico si tiene preguntas sobre su salud.

Cómo Reducir las PFAS en Su Agua Potable

Hervir el agua no elimina las PFAS, pero ciertos filtros pueden reducirlas o eliminarlas. Con tantos filtros disponibles, es importante elegir uno que esté específicamente certificado para reducir o eliminar PFAS. Los filtros varían por tipo, marca y método de instalación—como filtros de jarra, unidades montadas en el grifo o sistemas para toda la casa. A continuación se muestran tipos de filtros que han demostrado reducir o eliminar eficazmente los niveles de PFAS:

- **Carbón Activado Granular (GAC)** – atrapa químicos mientras que el agua pasa
- **Sistemas de Ósmosis Inversa (RO)** – eliminan contaminantes mediante una membrana delgada
- **Resinas de Intercambio Iónico** – pequeños gránulos que atraen y retienen contaminantes

Verifique la Certificación

Use filtros que cumplan con los estándares de la Fundación Nacional de Saneamiento/Instituto Nacional Estadounidense de Estándares (NSF/ANSI), específicamente NSF/ANSI 53 (para reducir contaminantes relacionados con la salud, incluidas PFAS) o NSF/ANSI 58 (para sistemas de ósmosis inversa). Puede verificar la certificación en: <https://info.nsf.org/Certified/dwtu/>. Asegúrese de reemplazar los filtros según las instrucciones del fabricante; al no hacerlo, puede aumentar la exposición a PFAS.

Preguntas

Comuníquese con Jeff Guy, Oficina de Relaciones Comunitarias de la EPA de Illinois:

☎ (217) 785-8724

✉ Jeff.Guy@illinois.gov

Más Información

Escanee el código QR a continuación para visitar la página de información sobre PFAS de la EPA de Illinois: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/water-quality/pfas.html>

