

Dear Residents:

As you are aware, DEP has installed a Point of Entry Treatment system (POETs) in numerous homes to filter out the PFAS in their drinking water supply wells. We are continuing our efforts to install additional systems in homes with PFAS concentrations above federal standards. When we install these systems, we share with homeowners and on the N Centre PFAS webpage what actions will follow that installation. Because it has been over a year now since those initial installations, we wanted to provide reminder of what to expect from DEP with respect to the treatment system maintenance and testing.

After a POET system is installed, the homeowner continues to receive bottled drinking water until the results from sampling conducted following installation are received and confirm that the PFAS are being effectively removed by the POET system. DEP has been conducting quarterly post-installation testing to monitor these systems in order to detect any “breakthrough”. A breakthrough is a detection of low levels of PFAS that would indicate that the filter is no longer working to effectively remove the contamination. **We have yet to see a sample result indicating this is occurring.**

In addition to testing, DEP is also monitoring water usage in each home containing a POETs. The filters in these systems have been tested and certified to a specific maximum volume of water filtered before replacement is recommended. This may occur well before breakthrough is seen, but the recommendation is related to potential fouling or clogging of the filter as it reaches its lifespan, similar to an air or oil filter in a vehicle. Our goal is to help homeowners determine the timing in which this capacity might be reached for long-term planning. Thus far we have changed filter units out in homes where excessive water was being used due to plumbing leaks or other issues and continue to monitor water usage.

During the duration of DEP’s investigation, any required filtration change-outs will be conducted by DEP utilizing HSCA funding. These change-outs will occur either at the first sign of breakthrough or when the filter usage meets the recommended capacity, whichever occurs first. Please understand that this will not follow a particular schedule in terms of number of months since installation. One reason for this is that each home uses a different average volume of water based upon number of occupants among other factors. Another reason is that the concentration of PFAS compounds varies in each home.

DEP’s goals in our testing protocol are to not only ensure the filtration is working as designed, and thus protecting the residents, but also to be able to provide information to each homeowner on recommended filtration change-out based upon sample results along with water usage when the investigation ends.

In addition to filtration replacements, other maintenance will be conducted as needed during our investigation. Because different homes had the need for additional components to ensure the most effective filtration occurs, some may have water softeners or sediment filters that were installed by DEP in addition to the filter tanks. If you have received any of these, we ask that you reach out to let us know when any issues occur or when maintenance is required, so that we can have Culligan respond as needed. Due to the various set-ups and differences in water usage and chemistry at each household, DEP is not able to monitor each component

DEP has also become aware of some confusion related to whether each home has received the same filtration. Any home that has a POETs has been provided with either the Aquasential (one set of two filtration tanks) or the Pioneer (one tank – only offered if that home's PFAS concentration was below a certain level). Prior to installation, Culligan conducts a home visit during which they assess the placement of the POETs and collect a water sample. They are not testing for PFAS at this time, but for water chemistry that may affect how efficiently the filter performs. Some homes in your community have wells that produce water with different water quality. This can result in pH levels, mineral content, suspended solids (sediment) or other factors that may need to be addressed with additional components. As mentioned above, in some homes we have added sediment filters, water softeners and pH neutralizers in order to pre-treat the water to reduce the impact of these conditions on the filter's life span. After the pretreatment, all of the homes are provided with one of the same two POET systems. Also please note that we only supply the pretreatment necessary for the efficient operation of the POETs and cannot supply the pretreatment if it is not needed for the system.

We hope that this helps clear up some of the uncertainty in the community about the POETs. We remain committed to providing you with effective treatment of the PFAS in the groundwater for the length of the HSCA investigation.