

The water industry widely believes that PFAS contaminates the source water that enters treatment plants and passes through them unless engineers specifically designed the treatment plant to remove the chemicals.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established a [website](#) that communicates PFAS information to public water systems (PWS) and consumers.

The Consolidated Mutual Water Company (CMWC) supplies water to its stockholders. It gets about 60% of its treated water from Denver Water and treats the rest at its own Maple Grove Water Treatment Plant (Maple Grove).

In 2020, both CMWC and Denver Water participated in a voluntary PFAS data collection. The results are on the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) [website](#).

- [Maple Grove](#) detected some PFAS in the potable water, but the levels were below the EPA's limits.
- [Denver Water](#) did not detect PFAS in the water, leaving its potable treatment plants.

In December 2021, the EPA published its fifth update of the unregulated contaminant monitoring rule ([UCMR5](#)) which focused on PFAS.

As a result, in 2023, CMWC and Denver Water were required to test for PFAS in the treatment plant(s) outflow quarterly. In addition, CMWC tested the water it buys from Denver Water at the locations where the purchased water enters CMWC's water distribution system.

Interested parties can review the results of the PFAS testing on the EPA's UCMR5 database at this link: [UCMR 5 Data Finder](#). Navigating this public database can be tricky, so the EPA made a short [video](#) explaining how to access the data.

If you don't have the time to search the data, know that CMWC will include any PFAS occurrence in the yearly consumer confidence report (CCR) distributed this spring. In addition, a quick summary of the UCMR5 PFAS occurrence is provided below for you to review.

A Maple Grove sample collected in October 2023 had small amounts of perfluorobutanesulfonic acid (PFBS), perfluorohexanoic acid (PFHxA), and perfluoropentanoic acid (PFPeA). The EPA has not established individual [maximum contaminant levels](#) (MCLs) for these substances. The amount of PFBS can be summated with levels of other chemicals to develop the hazard index (HI). However, the concentration of PFBS detected at Maple Grove does not raise the value above the HI. The remaining Maple Grove samples were below the Minimum Reporting Levels (MRL).

None of the Denver Water samples had any PFAS detections above the MRL.

CMWC is looking into how and when PFAS gets into the water at Maple Grove. This analysis may involve gathering more data. New EPA regulations will also require all public water systems to monitor PFAS levels in the water they distribute. CMWC and Denver Water will need to follow these monitoring and reporting rules.