



2/19/2025

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# PFAS Education Community Workshop

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Justin Brazil, Director of Water Quality

# Community Workshop Ground Rules

- Public discussion, not a debate
- Everyone should have an opportunity to speak
- Listen to and respect other points of view



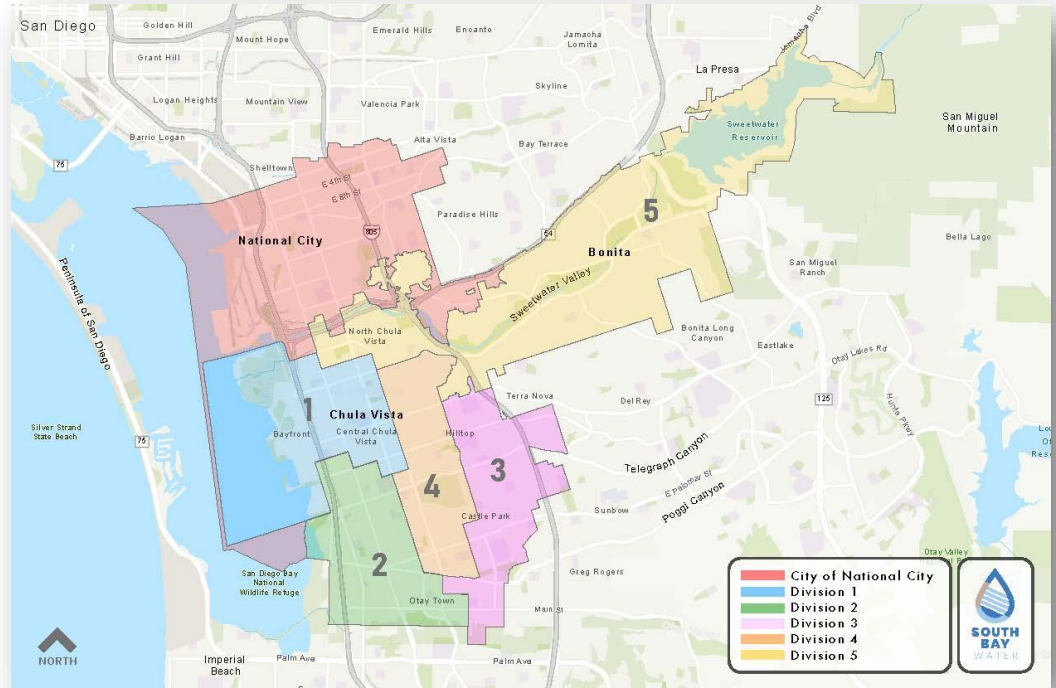
# Today's Agenda

- Purpose of meeting
- About Sweetwater Authority
- What are PFAS?
- EPA regulations
- PFAS testing results
- Potential solutions
- Public comment/Q&A
- Next steps/community workshops



# About Sweetwater Authority

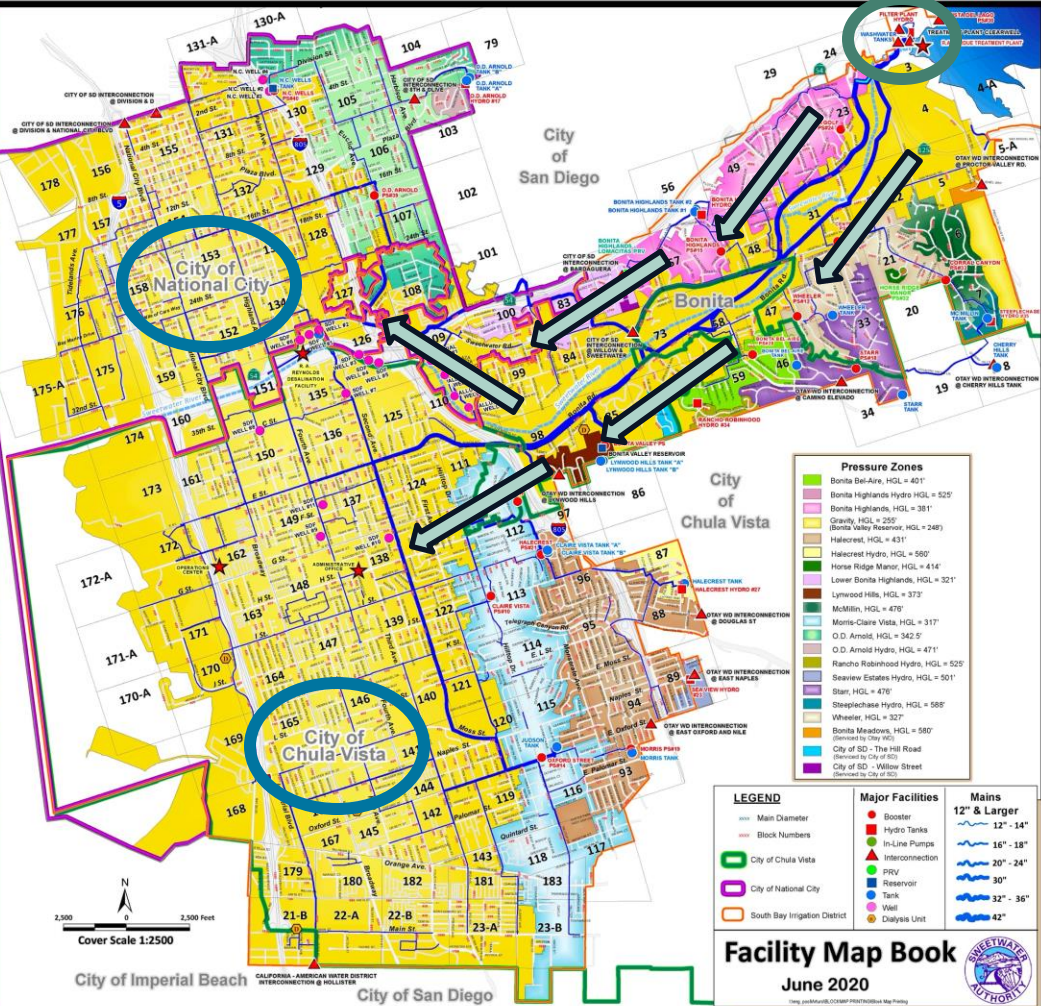
- Provide water service to 200,000 people in a 36-mile service area
  - National City
  - Bonita
  - Western and central portions of Chula Vista



Sweetwater Reservoir

**SWEETWATER AUTHORITY**

505 Garrett Avenue • Chula Vista, California 91910 • Phone: (619) 420-1413



# Sweetwater Authority Water Sources

- Water delivered through 400 miles of pipeline from four main sources:
  - Groundwater wells in National City
  - Storage of local runoff/surface water at Loveland Reservoir (Alpine) and Sweetwater Reservoir (Spring Valley)
  - San Diego Formation Wells in the lower Sweetwater River basin
  - Purchase of imported water from San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District



**Video Link**

# PFAS Explained



## What are PFAS?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are manmade chemicals found in common household items.



## Causes of PFAS

PFAS can leak into water sources through the following:

- Industry
- Firefighting foam
- Waterproof clothing
- Food boxes/wrapping
- Non-stick pans
- Cleaning products
- Personal care products



## Environment/water supply

PFAS are slow to break down and can move far from their original use areas.

When the products with PFAS are manufactured, used and then discarded, they enter the environment and can end up in water sources over time.

Sweetwater closely monitors and tests the water delivered to our customers; performing more than 15,000 measurements per year.



# Where are PFAS Found?



## Drinking Water

Drinking water contaminated by other sources of PFAS.



## Waste Sites

Soil and water at or near landfills, disposable sites and hazardous waste sites.



## Fire Extinguishing Foam

Used in training and emergency response events at airports and firefighting training facilities.



## Facilities

Chrome plating, electronics and certain textile and paper manufacturers that produce or use PFAS.



## Consumer products

Stain, water repellent or non-stick products, paints, sealants and some personal care products such as makeup.



## Food Packaging

Grease resistant paper, microwave popcorn bags, pizza boxes and candy wrappers.



## Biosolids

Fertilizer from wastewater treatment plants used on agricultural lands can affect ground and surface water.

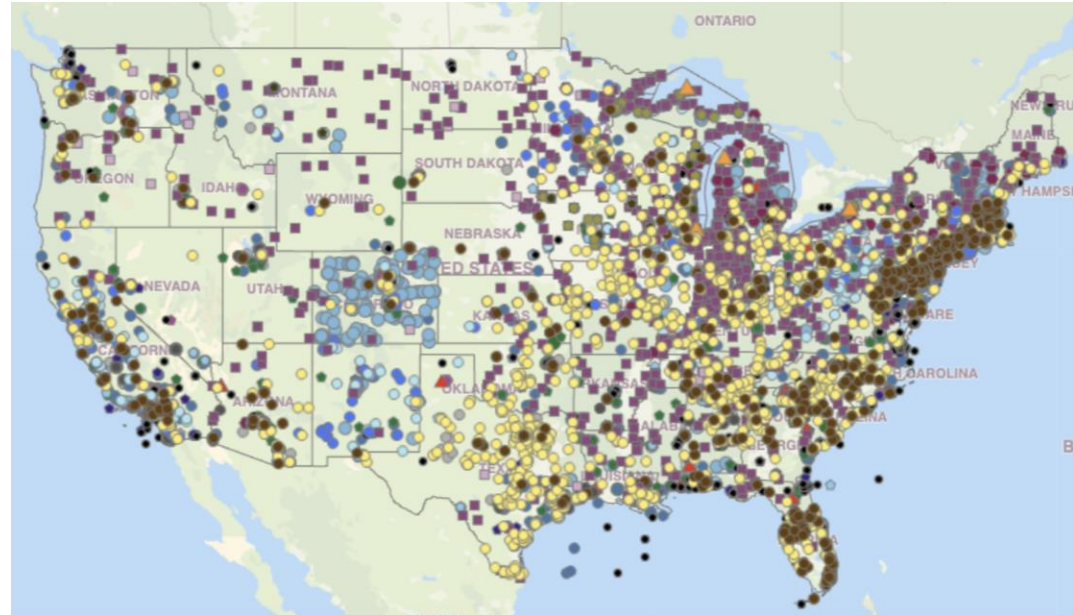
# EPA PFAS Mapping

## Data Available from Water Quality Portal:

	Above Median	Below Median	Non-Detect
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tissue			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Soil			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sediment			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other			

## Drinking Water - UCMR and State Data:

- UCMR PWSs with:
  - Result(s) Above Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)
  - Result(s) At or Above UCMR MRL
  - No Results At or Above UCMR MRL



Source: EPA PFAS Analytics

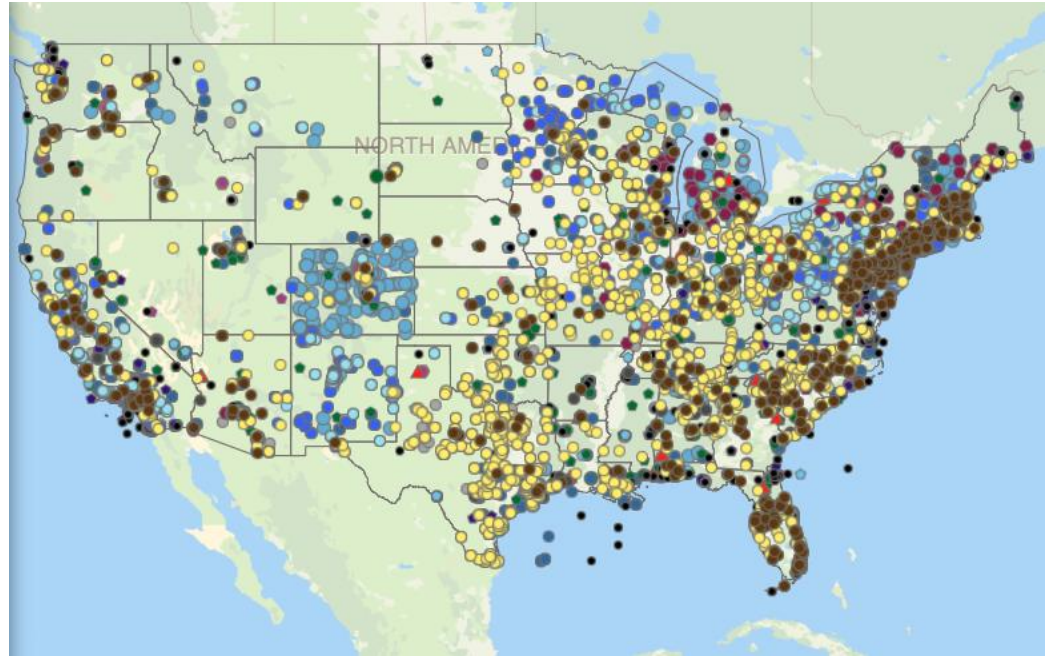
# EPA PFAS Mapping – Water only

## Data Available from Water Quality Portal:

	Above Median	Below Median	Non-Detect
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water	●	●	○
<input type="checkbox"/> Tissue	■	■	□
<input type="checkbox"/> Air	▲	▲	△
<input type="checkbox"/> Soil	◆	◆	◇
<input type="checkbox"/> Sediment	●	●	○
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	■	■	□

## Drinking Water - UCMR and State Data:

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Source: EPA PFAS Analytics

# Cost of PFAS Remediation

## PFAS Remediation Costs by Market



Sweetwater is actively considering all available options for remediation, ensuring the best possible strategy to balance, safety, cost and efficiency.

*Source: AECOM/Bank of America*

# Regulations and Testing – California

- **State of California** and **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** are taking significant steps to address PFAS
- **California** has one of the most **comprehensive PFAS testing and monitoring programs** in country
- Sweetwater has received monitoring orders from the State's Division of Drinking Water (DDW) and reports under this program



# Regulations and Testing – Federal

- Enforceable EPA regulations of six PFAS with the lowest level set at **4 PPT (parts per trillion)** taking effect in **2029**.
- In April 2024, EPA required public water systems to perform one year of initial quarterly monitoring by 2027, in order to meet new standards by April 2029.
- Sweetwater completed second round of initial monitoring in January 2025, while conducting required monitoring per Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR-5).



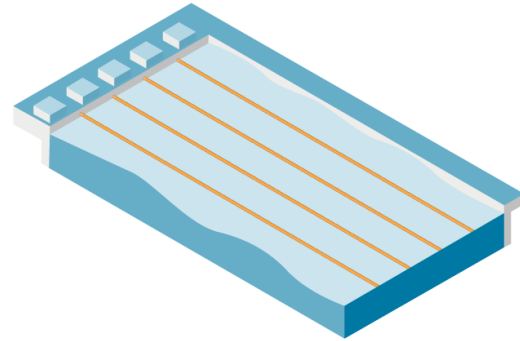
# EPA PFAS Metrics Explained

**4 Parts Per Trillion**  
of PFAS

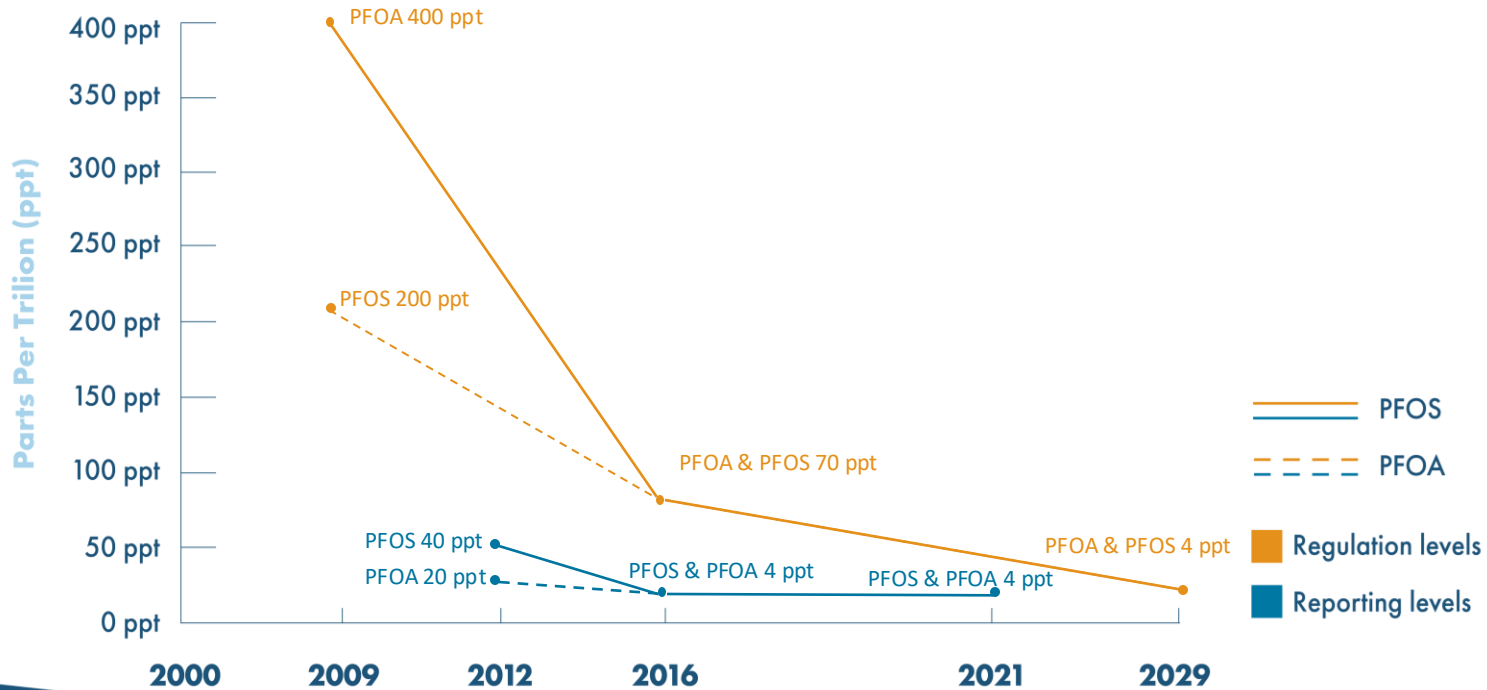


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**1 drop of water**  **in**  
**5 Olympic sized swimming pools**



# PFAS Regulation & Detection Levels





# CA Response and Notification Levels



**CA Response Level** — *The state has set a “response level” for PFAS in drinking water. If PFAS levels reach “response level”, the water agency is required to either:*

- Notify the public of the Response Level Exceedance
- Utilize treatment or blending
- Take the water source offline



**CA Notification Level** — *The state has set a “notification level” for PFAS in drinking water. Wholesale water providers are required to:*

- Notify local government agencies within the service area

# Testing Results Received – January 2025

Perdue Water Treatment Plant-Clearwell Effluent - <b>Treating 100% Sweetwater Reservoir</b>								
PFAS Compound	Sample Date (Q1)	Concentration (ng/L)	Sample Date (Q2)	Concentration (ng/L)	Sample Date (Q2, Confirmation)	Concentration (ng/L)	CA Notification Level (ng/L)	CA Response Level (ng/L)
Perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS)	10/23/24	6.7	1/14/25	9.4	2/5/25	6.6	3	20
Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA)	10/23/24	9.4	1/14/25	11.4	2/5/25	9.6	5.1	10
Perfluorobutanesulfonic acid (PFBS)	10/23/24	10.7	1/14/25	11.0	2/5/25	11.1	500	5000
Perfluoroheptanoic acid (PFHpA)	10/23/24	4.6	1/14/25	4.7	2/5/25	4.7		
Perfluorohexanoic acid (PFHxA)	10/23/24	7.7	1/14/25	8.6	2/5/25	9.2		
Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS)	10/23/24	5.7	1/14/25	4.8	2/5/25	ND (< 4 ng/L)	6.5	40
Perfluorobutanoic acid (PFBA)	10/23/24	10.5	1/14/25	12.3	2/5/25	12.6		
Perfluoropentanoic acid (PFPeA)	10/23/24	7.3	1/14/25	7.6	2/5/25	7.7		
Hazard index	Calculation	0.68	Calculation	0.95	Calculation	0.67		

Hazard Index (HI) Calculation: HI is determined by a sum of fractions.

Compares four compounds against the highest level below which there is no risk to health effects.

HI (Q1) = HFPO (0 ppt/10 ppt) + PFBS (10.7 ppt/2000 ppt) + PFNA (0 ppt/10 ppt) + PFHxS (6.7 ppt/ 10 ppt) = 0.68

HI (Q2) = HFPO (0 ppt/10 ppt) + PFBS (11.0 ppt/2000 ppt) + PFNA (0 ppt/10 ppt) + PFHxS (9.4 ppt/ 10 ppt) = 0.95

HI (Q2, Confirmation) = HFPO (0 ppt/10 ppt) + PFBS (11.1 ppt/2000 ppt) + PFNA (0 ppt/10 ppt) + PFHxS (6.6 ppt/ 10 ppt) = 0.67

MCL = Maximum Contaminant Level

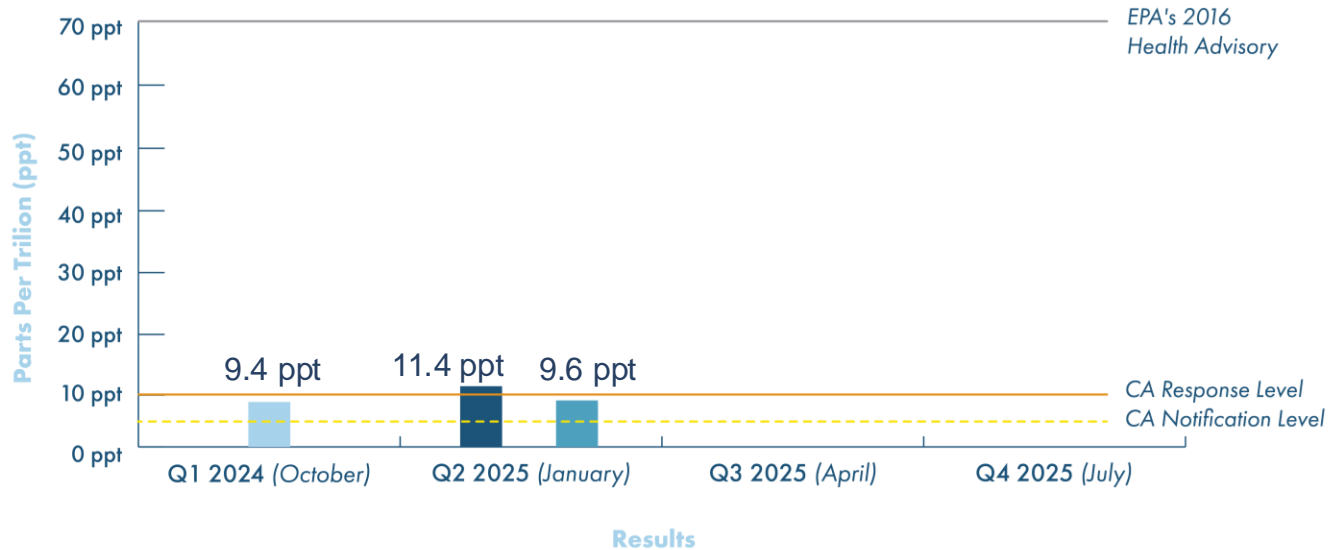
MCLG = Maximum Contaminant Level Goal



# Testing Results — Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA)

## PFAS Testing Results

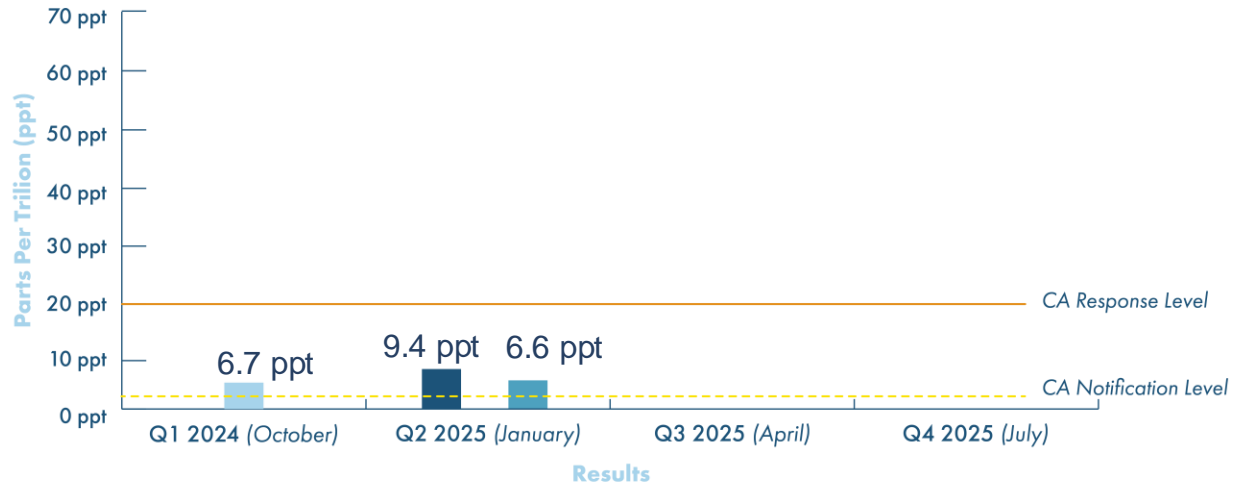
Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA)



# Testing Results — Perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS)

## PFAS Testing Results

Perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS)



# Committed to Long-Term PFAS Solutions



## What We're Doing Now

- ✓ **Ongoing Monitoring and Testing** – We are conducting regular testing to fully understand PFAS levels in our water supply. We have completed two of the four EPA required tests. We're committed to sharing results with customers transparently.
- ✓ **Exploring Treatment Options** – We are working with experts to determine the best long-term solution for removing PFAS, including different treatment technologies.
- ✓ **Seeking Funding and Cost Savings** – We are working with local, state and federal elected officials to pursue state and federal funding opportunities to help cover the costs of any necessary treatment

## What Comes Next?

- **Evaluating the Best Treatment Approach** – There are different ways to remove PFAS from water, such as ion exchange (IX) and granular activated carbon (GAC). We are studying these options to determine the most effective and cost-efficient solution.
- **Planning for Compliance by 2029** – We are on track to meet the new federal standards and will keep you updated on our progress.
- **Understanding the Financial Impact** – Upgrading water treatment facilities will require investment. While we are working to secure outside funding, future rate adjustments may be needed. We are committed to keeping costs as low as possible for our customers.
- **Keeping You Informed** – As we learn more, we will share updates and host community meetings to answer your questions.

# What Can You Do



## Water safety

We understand your concerns about water safety and your own personal water use.



## PFAS risk

PFAS are widespread in our environment, making it hard to completely avoid them.



## Water filters

EPA's recommendations for purchasing water filters:

- Choose filters that remove PFAS through reverse osmosis or activated carbon filters.
- Check labels for NSF/ANSI Standard 53 and 58 certifications
- Follow manufacturer's guidelines for ongoing maintenance.

*\*Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

# What Can You Do?

To learn more, please visit [www.epa.gov/pfas](https://www.epa.gov/pfas)

[EPA's Steps to Reduce PFAS Risk.](#)

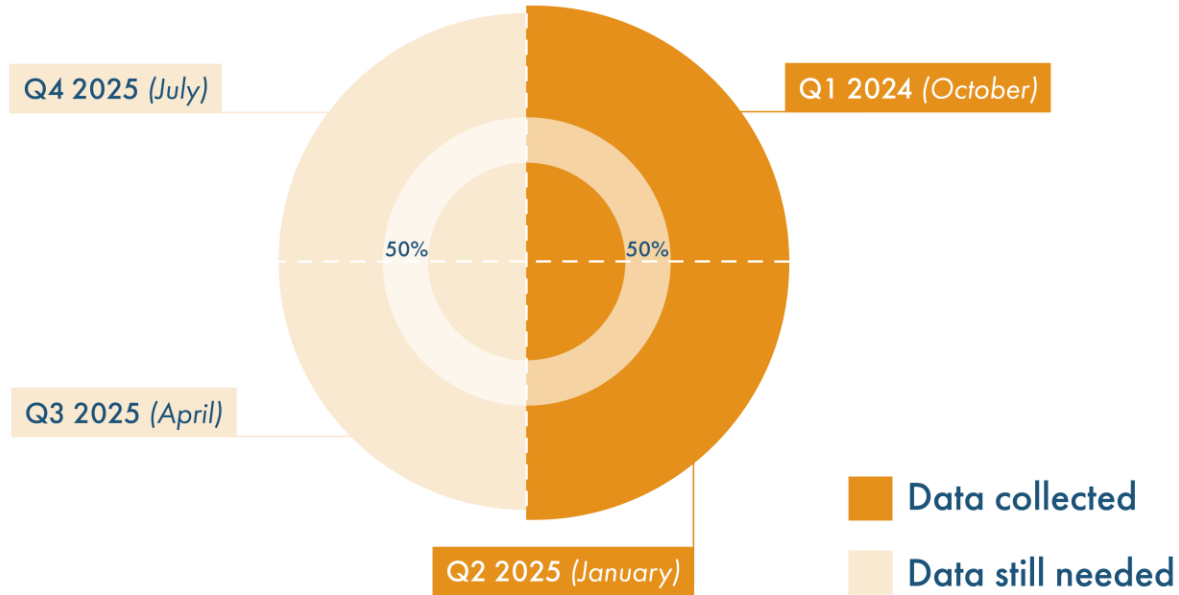


[EPA's Water Filter Fact Sheet](#)



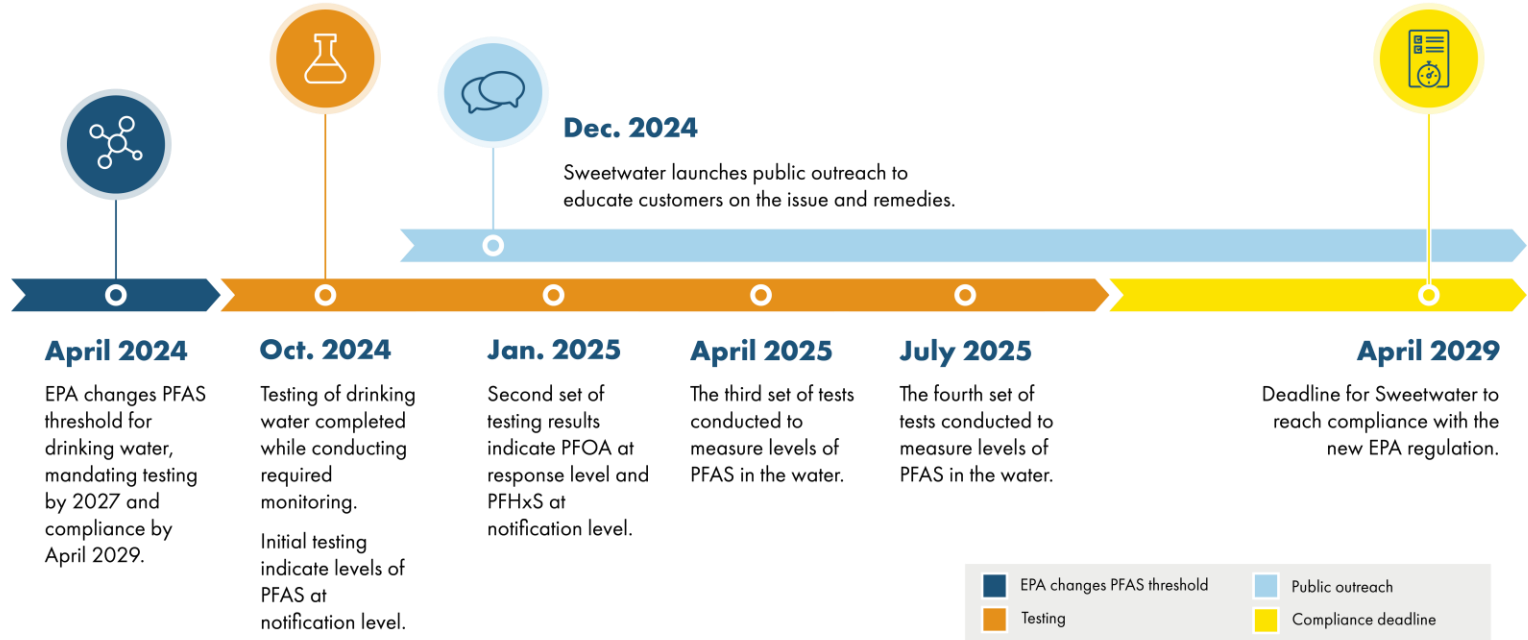
\*Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
<https://www.epa.gov/pfas/meaningful-and-achievable-steps-you-can-take-reduce-your-risk>  
<https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-04/water-filter-fact-sheet.pdf>

# PFAS Testing Progress





# Sweetwater Authority PFAS Timeline

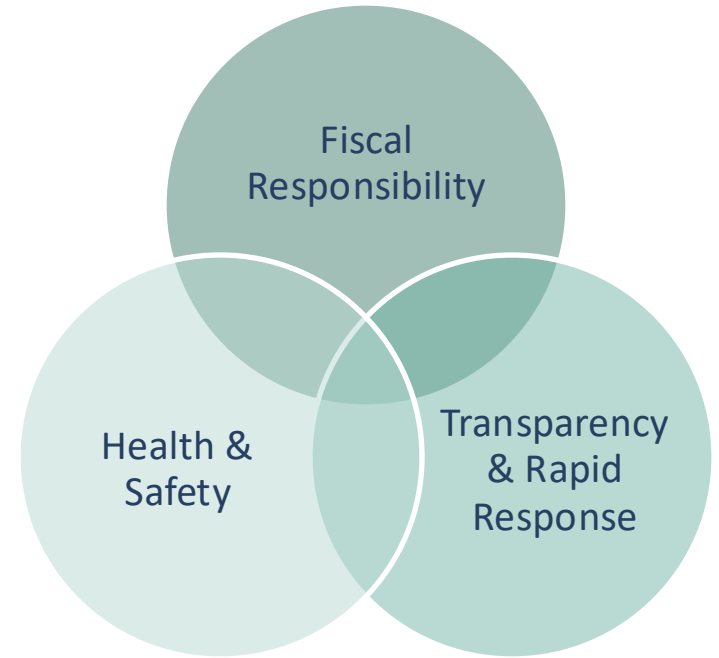


*\*Updated February 2025*






# Potential Solutions for the Future

- This is a critical moment for us to plan for new EPA regulations
- Important to plan now because of **significant costs associated with treating PFAS**
- Advanced filtration systems require major investments in infrastructure and ongoing operational costs
- Switching to imported water adds significant cost



# PFAS Public Outreach Efforts

- Committed to engaging community and stakeholders throughout the process
- Hosting four workshops to engage customers and community
- Potential for future meetings at key milestones

Meeting Type/Format	Location	Date/Time	
Community Advisory Working Group	Chula Vista	January 28, 5 p.m.	
Community Workshop #1	National City	Feb. 3, 5:30 p.m.	
Community Workshop #2	Chula Vista	February 13, 5:30 p.m.	
Community Workshop #3	Bonita	February 19, 5:45 p.m.	



# How you can get involved



Visit  
[www.sweetwater.org/  
PFAS](http://www.sweetwater.org/PFAS)



Sign up for our  
email list



Call us at  
(619) 409-6786



Email  
[PFAS@sweetwater.  
org](mailto:PFAS@sweetwater.org)



Attend a meeting

# PFAS Education Page Resources

- Workshop materials and video of presentation
- Questions from all workshops



[www.sweetwater.org/PFAS](http://www.sweetwater.org/PFAS)



# Q&A

