

Frequently Asked Questions for Private Well PFAS Testing and Mitigation Pilot Program

1. Applications and Eligibility

Q: How do I apply?

A: The first step is to apply to have your well tested. Applications can be submitted in one of two ways:

- Online (preferred) – submit your application electronically at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS
- By mail – download and complete the application documents at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS under the section called Documents

Q: How do I get a paper application form?

A: Paper application forms can be found on our website under the section Documents at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS

Q: Where do I mail my paper application for my rebate?

A: You can mail your paper rebate application to your county health department. Please visit their website or find a list of county health department mailing addresses at the end of the Rebate Application PDF at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.

Q: Does it cost money to apply for testing?

A: No, testing conducted as part of this program is at no cost to the applicant.

Q: Am I eligible for testing if I receive my water from my town or city?

A: No, the Program is only for properties with private wells and Transient Non-Community Public Water Systems. A transient Non-Community Public Water System” is a business or facility that serves the public such as water systems that serve parks, convenience stores, restaurants and other establishments open to the public.

Q: Why are people on public water not eligible for the Private Well PFAS Testing and Mitigation Rebate Pilot Program?

A: Public water systems are already testing and treating for PFAS. Public water systems must also meet New York State public drinking water standards for PFOA and PFOS. Learn more about how public water systems are protected from PFAS at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.

Q: Why is this program only offering mitigation rebates for PFOA and PFOS in private wells?

A: This pilot program focuses on PFOA and PFOS because they:

- are the most common forms of PFAS detected in New York State drinking water
- remain in the human body and environment for a long time
- are not routinely tested for by homeowners in private wells
- are expensive to test for and treat
- are the most well researched types of PFAS in terms of impact on human health and proven treatment technologies

- New York State has specific public drinking water standards or maximum contaminant levels (MCLs), which are used as guidelines for these contaminants in private wells

Q: Why is this pilot program being offered?

A: While New York State does not regulate PFAS in private wells, the New York State Department of Health encourages private well owners to test their water regularly for contaminants and maintain their wells. This program gives people on private wells the opportunity to test for PFAS in their drinking water and financial assistance to eligible applicants to install PFAS water treatment.

Q: How do I know when application periods are open in my county?

A: We will accept applications in Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Suffolk, Ulster, and Westchester when their individual county participation contracts are in place. Please look for future announcements at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS and participating county websites.

Q: What if I'm a tenant? Can I still apply for testing or a rebate?

A: If you are a tenant, you will need to contact the property owner to have them submit an application for testing or provide a notarized Owner Acknowledgement found under the Documents section on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.

Q: Why do I need property owner consent to participate in this program?

A: Tenants must apply for this program with a notarized property owner acknowledgement form. New York State law requires property owners to keep a property fit for human habitation and make necessary repairs after proper notice.

Q: If I receive bottled water or treatment from a third party that may be responsible for the PFAS contamination in my well water, am I eligible for the rebate?

A: No, this program is for PFAS contamination to private drinking water supplies that are not associated with a known contaminant source/contaminated property and/or a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation remedial site.

Q: What are the eligibility criteria for testing and for getting a rebate?

A: If your drinking water comes from a private well, property owners or tenants in Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Suffolk, Ulster, or Westchester counties may apply to have their water tested for PFAS at no cost. Property owners and tenants can apply for testing. However, tenants must provide a notarized property owner acknowledgement form found at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS under the Documents Section. Only property owners can apply for a rebate for installation of a PFAS water treatment system or connection to a public water system, if available)

- For more information on whether you are eligible for testing or a rebate as part of this program, please visit health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.

Q: Who can apply for this program?

A: If your drinking water comes from a private well, property owners or tenants in Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Suffolk, Ulster, or Westchester counties may apply to have their water tested when the program is accepting applications in your county. When tenants apply for testing, property owners must sign a notarized Property Owner Acknowledgment form found on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS under documents and only property owners are eligible to apply for a mitigation rebate.

Businesses that have a transient non-community water system may also apply. A transient non-community water system serves the public for more than six months out of the year. Rest stops, parks, convenience stores and restaurants with their own water supplies are examples.

Your well must not be associated with a known contamination site already being addressed by DEC or a responsible party.

Q: Why is the pilot program only available in certain counties?

A: New York State prioritized counties as part of this pilot program that are most likely to have background PFAS contamination. What we learn from this pilot will help inform potential future phases of this program.

Q: What can I do if I am not eligible for a rebate, but I want to explore options to reduce PFAS my own expense?

A: New York State always recommends that people take actions to reduce exposures from contaminants in drinking water. Please review [Reducing PFAS in Private Wells](#) under Documents on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS. It describes a range of water treatment options, including those that are significantly less costly.

2. PFAS, Testing and MCLs

Q: What are PFAS?

PFAS are a group of manufactured chemicals that are present in many household and commercial products due to their stain and water-resistant properties. Products include cosmetics, food packaging, non-stick pans, fire-fighting foams, adhesives, and water-repellent clothing. Visit our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS

Q: Does boiling my water get rid of PFAS contamination?

A: No, boiling water does not get rid of PFAS contamination.

Q: Where did the contamination come from?

A: The exact source of PFAS contamination can be difficult to identify given the widespread use of PFAS in society. PFAS is common in both industrial and household consumer products. Sources of PFAS contamination in groundwater can originate from industrial uses but also from non-industrial sources such as landfills, commercial and domestic wastewater, and contaminated fertilizer used on farm fields.

Q: Why should I be concerned about PFAS in drinking water?

A: When PFAS are found in your drinking water, the main exposure is typically from eating and drinking foods prepared with that water. Washing and bathing does not represent a significant source of exposure. Because PFAS can stay in water for a long time, it's important for private well users to know whether PFAS are present in their drinking water.

Q: What are the health risks of PFAS?

A: Scientists are still learning about the health effects associated with PFAS exposure. Not all PFAS have the same health effects. Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs), such as 10 ppt in New York State, are implemented to prevent high levels of PFAS in drinking water. For more information on what health effects have been associated with PFAS, please visit <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/about/health-effects.html>.

Q: How might I be exposed to PFAS besides drinking water?

A: People can be exposed to PFAS by breathing air and dust and consuming water contaminated from PFAS-containing fire-fighting foam, industrial sources, food, and consumer products.

Q: Is skin exposure a risk and does showering increase exposure?

A: When PFAS is found in drinking water, the main exposure is typically from consuming that water and eating foods prepared with that water. Household uses such as cleaning, dishwashing, showering and bathing, do not result in significant exposure. For more information on PFAS exposure, please visit health.ny.gov/chemicalsandhealth

Q: How can I get rid of the PFAS in my drinking water?

A: The most common treatment for PFAS in drinking water is filtering the water through granular activated carbon (GAC). As the water passes through the carbon, the PFAS compounds are trapped in the carbon and are effectively removed from the drinking water. Reverse osmosis is also a common technology in water treatment systems certified to treat PFAS. It is important that the treatment system is certified for PFAS removal and is properly maintained over time to remain effective. We recommend homeowners obtain service contracts with their vendors or work with them on an operation and maintenance plan. More information on maintenance plans can be found at on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.

Q: What other contaminants should I be testing for in my private well?

A: Test your well every year for bacteria and follow advice on our website at health.ny.gov/privatewells to test for other contaminants in private wells.

Q: What is a maximum contaminant level (MCL)?

A: “Maximum contaminant level” or “MCL” means the limit set on the level of contaminants allowable in public drinking water systems under New York State Drinking Water regulations.

Q: What are the MCLs (or drinking water standards) for PFAS compounds?

A: PFOA and PFOS are the only PFAS compounds with New York State drinking water standards. The standard for both PFOA and PFOS is 10 nanograms per liter (ng/L), also known as parts per trillion (ppt).

Q: Why doesn't NYS use US Environmental Protection Agency Maximum Contaminants Levels (MCLs) for PFOA and PFOS of 4 parts per trillion (ppt)?

A: In New York State, 10 nanograms per liter (ng/L), also known as parts per trillion (ppt), is the currently enforceable MCL for PFOA and PFOS for public water systems. New York State also uses these MCLs as guidance for private wells and this program adheres to these existing state regulations.

Q: Do I need to have PFAS concentrations in my water above a certain level to be “eligible for a rebate”?

A: Yes. The levels of PFOA and PFOS must be 10 nanograms per liter or above.

Q: I already had my well tested. Can I use those results to apply for a rebate?

A: Water test must be conducted as part of this program. People in Suffolk County can use water tests conducted by Suffolk County Department of Health Services that are dated January 1, 2025 or later.

Q: How will the data from my testing results be used?

A: Your test results will be used to determine eligibility for rebate and shared with you. All personal data collected as part of this program is protected and remains confidential and secure. Any identifying information related to sampling your private well, including names, addresses, personal emails, and phone numbers will not be used for any other purpose other than implementing this pilot program, and will not be shared with anyone else.

Information collected from this program may also be used to help inform public health and environmental protection efforts, but individual households will not be identified and personally identifying information will not be shared. For example, group-level summary data that do not show any personally identifying information may be used in any scientific publications, reports, or presentations.

Q: Will any information from my test results be used by New York State?

A: According to the freedom of information law (FOIL), group-level information such as the county where the test was performed in, in addition to de-identified test results may be used by the State to inform public health and environmental protection efforts. No individual or personal information such as name or address will be shared.

Q: Could I be required to share any information from my test results?

A: Under Section 462 of New York Real Property Law, many sellers of residential property are required to complete a Property Condition Disclosure Statement, provided to purchasers, that includes information regarding environmental concerns and any testing of the property for contamination.

Q: Why does it take time to receive my test results?

A: Samples must be analyzed by a certified laboratory. Results will be sent as soon as they are available and following New York State quality assurance and review.

Q: I have a question about my lab results.

A: Information about understanding your lab results is available on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS. The “Understanding Your Lab Report” resource under the documents section provides more information on interpreting test results.

Q: How do I obtain the required post-treatment sample for my newly installed water treatment tested?

A:

- New York State strongly encourages using a professional water treatment contractor to install your treatment system.
- If your water treatment system was installed by a water treatment contractor, that contractor must perform a post installation test showing levels are below 10 ng/L for PFOA and PFOS.
- Property owners who wish to test independently must use a [New York State Accredited Environmental Laboratory](#) to collect and analyze their sample. Use the main search to find laboratories in your community. Under the **Advanced Search** options:
 - **Category:** choose potable water
 - **Analyte:** choose PFOS
 - **Method:** EPA 537.1 version 2 for Method.
 - **Repeat search:** Change Analyte to PFOA and keep other categories the same.
 - Carefully follow all instructions and use materials provided by the certified laboratory to collect your sample.

3. Water Treatment Systems and Maintenance – POETs and POUTs

Q: What is a POET system?

A: POET stands for point of entry treatment system. POETs are water filtration systems installed on the main waterline of a house or building and filters the water distributed throughout the home or building. POETs with carbon filtration or ion exchange are examples of eligible

treatment systems to treat PFAS contaminants in drinking water. For more information please see **Eligibility Criteria for Rebates** under the documents section at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.

Q: What evidence do we have for the effectiveness of POET systems?

A: There are many studies that show the effectiveness of POET systems for treating PFAS contamination. Visit our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS for more information on POETs.

Q: How do I find a professional water treatment contractor?

A: To find a certified water treatment installer, see the list of certified contractors on the program website health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.

Q: How do I get help with maintaining my PFAS water treatment system?

A: A list of licensed water treatment professionals in each county can be found on the DOH program website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.

- People should carefully follow the maintenance schedules and instruction provided with your treatment system.
- General guidance for owner-installed PFAS treatment systems is also available in Rebate Program Operation and Maintenance Guidance under the Documents section on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.
- Businesses and facilities that are classified as a transient non-community water system may also need to coordinate with your County Health Department to ensure compliance with local regulations. You can also find a link to your county health department on our website

Q: Are ongoing testing and water treatment system operation and maintenance costs covered?

A: No. Costs associated with monitoring and maintenance of treatment systems are not covered under the program.

- This program only covers the installation and one-time PFAS testing immediately following water treatment installation. That one-time test will compare levels of PFAS in your untreated and treated water to ensure adequate water treatment.
- No in-home testing is needed if you are connecting to a public water system because PFAS and other contaminants are already monitored and treated by public water systems before water is delivered to your home.

Q: What are my responsibilities to maintain water treatment systems?

A: You will need to properly maintain your treatment system for effective PFAS removal over time. New York State encourages investing in a water treatment maintenance plan with a water treatment professional. The cost of maintenance plans varies based on the treatment system and should be considered when deciding whether to participate in this program. General guidance for owner-installed PFAS treatment systems is also available in Rebate Program

Operation and Maintenance Guide under the Documents section on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.

Q: What are the expected maintenance costs?

A: For most residential homeowners using a contractor, the average annual POET maintenance cost should be less than \$800 per year. This includes ultra-violet (UV) lamp and sediment filter service. For owners performing UV lamp and sediment filter maintenance on their own, the cost is anticipated to be less than \$300 per year.

- Using a contractor, changing the carbon filter performed on a standard POET system could cost about \$1,500. Filter changes are needed to continue removing PFAS and other contaminants every five years.
- PFAS water testing from a laboratory can cost about \$300 per sample. Typical single-family residential POET systems should be sampled at a minimum of once per year. Systems with higher than average water usage or other site-specific factors affecting treatment should consider sampling more frequently.
- Talk with your water treatment contractor about maintenance plan options which may help spread out these costs over the life of your system.
- Additional information on system maintenance can be found in the Rebate Program Operation and Maintenance Guide under documents on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS

Q: How do I know what treatment is best for me?

A: Talk to a professional water treatment contractor about what system will work best for your situation. A list of contractors in your county can be found in the contractor list on the program website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS. Your contractor and you should carefully review the **Eligibility Criteria for Rebates** under the document section on our website before starting any work to ensure your water treatment is eligible for a rebate.

Q: If I have the choice between connecting to a public water system or installing a water treatment system, what is the better option?

A: You should always get connected to a public water system, if you have the opportunity. Public water is the best option for household drinking water because it is regularly monitored and managed by a certified water operator and does not require maintenance at the homeowner's expense.

Q: What type of granular activated carbon is used? What type of UV lamp do I need? What type of sediment filter do I have?

A: New York State strongly encourages people to work with a professional water treatment contractor. General information about owner-installed PFAS water treatment systems is available in the Rebate Program Operation and Maintenance Guide under documents on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS. For already installed water treatment systems Information on water treatment components should be provided in your manufacturer's manual.

Q: How long will the granular activated carbon in tanks effectively treat my water?

A: In typical single-family homes with a whole-house POET system, the carbon should be effective at removing PFAS for several years before needing carbon replacement. New York State strongly encourages people to work with a professional water treatment contractor. General information for owner-installed PFAS treatment systems is available in the Rebate Program Operation and Maintenance Guide under documents on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS. For already installed water treatment systems Information on water treatment components should be provided in your manufacturer's manual.

Q: Is there a user's guide for maintaining my system?

A: Yes, you may find information on maintaining your system in the manufacturer's manual provided with your PFAS water treatment system. General information is also available in the Rebate Program Operation and Maintenance Guide under documents on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS. New York State strongly encourages people to work with a professional water treatment contractor to maintain your water treatment system. Maintenance plans may be available to spread out the costs over the lifetime of your system.

Q: Is water testing my PFAS water treatment system necessary? If so, what labs should be used?

A: Yes you will need to test you water and properly maintain your treatment system for effective PFAS treatment over time. New York State encourages investing in a water treatment maintenance plan with a water treatment professional. The cost of maintenance plans varies based on the treatment system and should be considered when deciding whether to participate in this program.

- Property owners who wish to test independently must use a [New York State Accredited Environmental Laboratory](https://health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS) linked on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS. Use the main search to find laboratories in your community. Under the **Advanced Search** options:
 - **Category:** choose potable water
 - **Analyte:** choose PFOS
 - **Method:** EPA 537.1 version 2 for Method.
 - **Repeat search:** Change Analyte to PFOA and keep other categories the same.
 - Carefully follow all instructions and use materials provided by the certified laboratory to collect your sample.

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- Using a contractor, changing the carbon filter performed on a standard POET system could cost about \$1,500. Filter changes are needed to continue removing PFAS and other contaminants every five years.
- PFAS water testing from a laboratory can cost about \$300 per sample. Typical single-family residential POET systems should be sampled at a minimum of once per year. Systems with higher than average water usage or other site-specific factors affecting treatment should consider sampling more frequently.
- Talk with your water treatment contractor about maintenance plan options which may help spread out these costs over the life of your system.
- Additional information on system maintenance can be found in the Rebate Program Operation and Maintenance Guide under documents on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS

Q: What is a transient non-community water system and are they eligible for testing and rebates through this program?

A: Businesses served by a transient non-community water system may also apply for testing and a mitigation rebate, if recommended based on the sampling data. A transient non-community water system serves the public for more than six months out of the year. Rest stops, parks, convenience stores and restaurants with their own water supplies are examples of a transient non-community water system.

Q: Are the requirements different for a transient non-community water system to apply for a rebate?

A: Yes. Please review the Eligibility Criteria for Rebates located on our website under documents at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS. You may need to reach out to your county for additional guidance. You also can look up your county on our website.

Q: How can I find out if my property is associated with a DEC remedial site?

A: Go to DECinfo Locator at <https://dec.ny.gov/maps/interactive-maps/decinfo-locator>. DECinfo Locator is an interactive map that lets you access DEC documents and public data about the environmental quality of specific sites in New York State. With more than 90 data layers available, this is the first application that shows both environmental quality monitoring and natural resource information together in one place. If you need help, call the program hotline at (800) 616-9275 or email us at PrivateWellPFAS@hrpassociates.com.

Q: What areas within the state are impacted (or potentially impacted) by PFAS?

A: You may refer to DECinfo Locator at <https://dec.ny.gov/maps/interactive-maps/decinfo-locator> to determine whether a well is near an existing DEC remedial site, landfill, or known contaminant source. In addition to known sources of PFAS contamination, groundwater can also be impacted by runoff and precipitation contaminated with PFAS. If you need help, call the program hotline at (800) 616-9275 or email us at PrivateWellPFAS@hrpassociates.com.

4. Rebates

Q: What is the maximum rebate I can receive?

A: The program offers a rebate of up to **\$5,000** to install a PFAS point of entry treatment (POET) system. The program offers a rebate of a one-time payment up to **\$10,000** to connect your property to a public water supply, if possible. The program also offers up to **\$1,000** for one or more point-of-use water treatment system(s) (POUTS) on specific water taps or drinking water outlets in cases where space is limited, or plumbing is not accessible. Point-of-use treatment is not an option for businesses and facilities that are transient non-community water systems.

Q: How long does it take to receive a rebate?

A: Depending on the volume of applications received, rebates may take several months. Rebate applications will be reviewed in the order in which they are received.

Q: Can rebates be used for non-PFAS water treatment systems?

A: No. This rebate program will only cover treatment systems listed on **Eligibility Criteria for Rebates**, which is available under documents at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.

Q: What costs are covered under the rebate?

A: Please carefully review **Eligibility Criteria for Rebates**, which is available under documents at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS with your contractor before installing with PFAS water treatment. This rebate program will only cover treatment systems listed there.

Q: Can I receive more than one rebate for my residential address?

A: No, each property is eligible for a single rebate.

Q: Are ongoing testing and water treatment system maintenance costs eligible for rebates?

A: No. Costs associated with ongoing testing or water treatment monitoring and maintenance of treatment systems are not covered under the program.

This program only covers the installation and a test immediately following water treatment installation. The test will compare levels of PFAS in your untreated and treated water to ensure that PFOA and PFOS in drinking water has been removed. Post installation tests are not required when connecting to a public water system because these systems are already monitored and treated by public water systems before water is delivered to your home.

Q: If I installed a POET system or service connection not as part of this program, can I still apply for the rebate?

A: No. Rebates are only available for new installations or connections listed in the **Eligibility Criteria for Rebates**, which is available under documents at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.

Q: Are PFAS point of use systems (POUTS) eligible for rebates?

A: POUTS are eligible for a rebate in residential properties on specific water taps or drinking water outlets in cases where space is limited or plumbing is not accessible. This treatment type is not an option for businesses and facilities that are Transient Non-Community water systems.

Q: What if I don't have the funds to pay a contractor to install a treatment system?

A: If your contractor is willing to do the work, you can use the Assignment of Payment form under documents on our website at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS to pay them directly. The Assignment of Payment Form needs to be included with your rebate application.