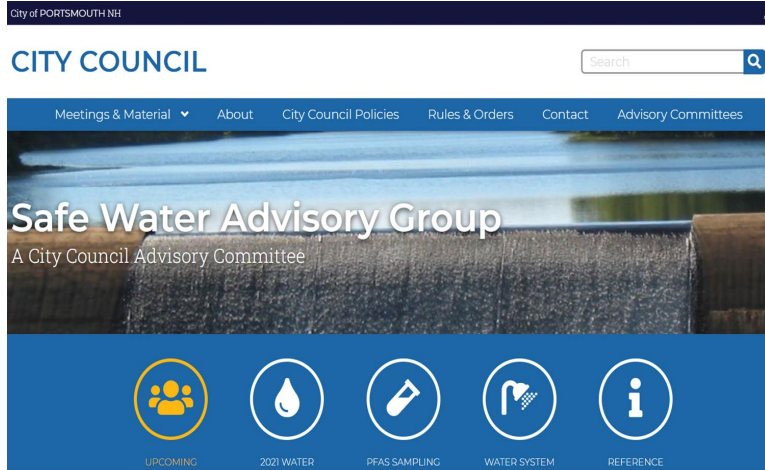


Safe Water Advisory Group Update

12/20/2021 | Portsmouth City Council

Andrea Amico & Brian Goetz

Safe Water Advisory Group - SWAG



- SWAG was approved by City Council October 5, 2020
- SWAG held initial meeting on 12/15/2020 to organize and discuss logistics
- SWAG voted to have 2 co-chairs:
 - Brian Goetz & Andrea Amico
- SWAG met 5 times in 2021 - covered a variety of topics
- Established a SWAG Overview document & Goals
- City maintains a website for the SWAG with reference documents, meeting minutes, videos of meetings, etc

SWAG Meeting Topics in 2021

February Meeting:

- SWAG Overview Document
- Overview of Portsmouth Water Systems (history, supply sources, operations, contaminants of concern, PFAS source) (Brian Goetz & Al Pratt, City of Portsmouth)

April Meeting:

- PFAS at the national level and what other states are doing to address PFAS (Dr. Laurel Schaidler, Silent Spring Institute).
- PFAS regulation in New Hampshire (Dr Jonathan Ali, NH DES Toxicologist)
- PFAS in the City of Portsmouth (Brian Goetz & Al Pratt, City of Portsmouth)
- Community-led PFAS sampling projects (Andrea Amico, Testing for Pease)

June Meeting:

- Portsmouth school process/rules for water testing (Ken Linchey, Portsmouth School Dept)
- PFAS community organizing and how it has impacted progress on PFAS awareness & action (Andrea Amico, Testing for Pease)
- Water legislation (current & pending) at State & Federal level (State Rep David Meuse & State Senator Perkins-Kwoka)

September Meeting:

- Private well owners (Brandon Kernen, NHDES Drinking Water & Groundwater Administrator)
- Climate Change & effects on drinking water (Al Pratt, Water Resource Manager, City of Portsmouth)
- Update on Haven Well re-opening, treatment, & testing (Brian Goetz, DPW Deputy Director, City of Portsmouth)

SWAG Meeting Topics in 2021

October Meeting:

- On October 22, 2021, six members of the SWAG toured the Madbury Treatment Plant



November Meeting:

- Recap last year
- Share PFPrA finding
- Open discussion
- Report & Recommendations



SWAG Goals

1) Have an overview of the water system and what is tested for in our water.

Goal achieved in Feb 2021

2) Understand contaminants of concern the city is facing.

Goal partially achieved in Feb 2021 and throughout SWAG meetings in 2021. Evolving with more data.

3) Overview of pending legislation and potential future legislation that will support the community.

Goal achieved in June 2021. Evolving as more legislation is proposed and passed.

4) Review NH state PFAS guidelines and science/reasoning used behind it.

Goal achieved in April 2021.

5) Host a clean drinking water forum to provide education and Q&A session for city residents.

Goal not achieved - planning for community forum May 2022 during National Drinking Water Week

6) Report back to the City Council by the end of 2021 (or sooner as needed).

Will be achieved on Dec 20, 2021

PFPrA Finding

Pilot Study with National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) tested tap samples for more expansive, targeted list of PFAS in summer of 2020

One residential tap sample from City of Portsmouth was analyzed as part of the pilot study by Eurofins labs - sample analyzed for 70 PFAS

Results showed 7 PFAS found in the Portsmouth tap sample totaling 50.1 ppt. One PFAS was detected that had never been tested for before - PFPrA at 35 ppt

Prior tap samples tested for PFAS test with 28 targeted compounds showed low levels of 6 to 9 different PFAS ranging from a total of 3.7 to 15.4 ppt (data reviewed in April SWAG meeting)

What do we know about PFPrA?

Short chain compound - C3

No toxicological data

Not regulated by EPA nor required to be tested for by public water supplies

Has been detected in many other sources (polar ice caps, bottled water, rain water, other water supplies in different states)

Reverse osmosis (RO) filtration can effectively filter it from water

Granular activated carbon (GAC) filtration is less effective due to short chain compound

More to come as the pilot study works on data analysis from other communities and publishes a report (hopefully early 2022) to give study participants more context

Per letter on 12/16/21 from NH DES and US EPA, they will collaborate with Portsmouth community to obtain additional water samples for US EPA and Eurofins to analyze for PFPrA

SWAG Recommendations to Portsmouth City Council

- Reinstate SWAG in 2022 with the new incoming City Council
- SWAG will host a community drinking water forum with Q&A in 2022 to during National Drinking Water week in May 2022
- Portsmouth DPW provide a quarterly newsletter to community – water supply status, water quality and project updates (currently produced as separate documents)
- SWAG will continue to monitor developments regarding contaminants of emerging concern.
- SWAG will continue to monitor for legislation at the State & Federal level that will help address water quality issues in the City.
- SWAG will collaborate with NH DES to identify and outreach private well owners in the City of Portsmouth to inform them on water testing recommendations and available labs.

SWAG Recommendations to Portsmouth City Council

- SWAG will monitor developments related to the PFPrA finding and additional samples planned by NH DES and US EPA
- City of Portsmouth needs to improve community education on PFAS and other contaminants of concern (e.g., lead) and on safe disposal of PFAS-containing items (e.g., water filters at their end life, Teflon pans, etc).

Though not directly related to the City's drinking water system's water quality, some members of the committee had the following recommendations:

- SWAG should discuss the potential impacts on drinking water from Coakley Landfill in more depth at future meetings.
- City of Portsmouth should conduct PFAS testing of water running off the artificial turf at Community Campus to monitor for leaching into the surrounding wetlands and stormwater.

Questions

Thank you for putting the SWAG in place!

And thank you to the SWAG members who have dedicated their time to be a part of this group.