

A ROME WATER & SEWER DIVISION EPA UPDATE BRIEF (PFOA/PFOS)

June 16, 2022

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR OUR CUSTOMERS:

On June 15, 2022, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”), issued Interim Updated Drinking Water Health Advisories for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) replacing the Health Advisories the EPA issued in 2016. PFOA and PFOS are members of a chemical groups called per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The updated Advisory levels, which are based on new science, indicate that negative health effects can occur with concentrations of PFOA or PFOS in water that are near zero. These Interim Health Advisories will remain in place until the EPA establishes a National Primary Drinking Water Regulation.

The EPA also issued final Health Advisories to two (2) more “forever chemicals” PFBS and GenX. PFBS can be found in Rome’s water supply, but the levels are currently below the Health Advisory limits in Rome’s drinking water. A copy of the new Health Advisories and other information regarding PFAS can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/drinking-water-health-advisories-pfoa-and-pfos> and www.epa.gov/pfas. Further, please see the attached Drinking Water Health Advisories for PFAS Fact Sheet for Communities.

Rome Water & Sewer Division (“RWSD”) has been actively working to reduce the levels of PFAS in the City of Rome’s drinking water. After extensive studies and pilot testing, RWSD staff implemented the use of Granular Activated Carbon (“GAC”) within existing filter beds at a capital cost, to date, of over \$3 Million Dollars. Going forward, RWSD expects to incur annual GAC replacement costs of approximately \$500,000.00, until a permanent treatment technique can be installed. Based on an extensive study that was conducted, the most efficient and cost-effective method of removing all PFAS from Rome’s drinking water is to install a Reverse Osmosis (“RO”) water treatment system. RWSD has begun engineering/designing a RO treatment system. However, this treatment system will take two or more years before it is finalized.

In the event our temporary GAC system cannot completely remove all of the PFAS from Rome’s drinking water, we are exploring all options. We are looking into other temporary, emergency measures now in order to reduce the levels of PFOA and PFOS in Rome’s drinking water. RWSD will continue to provide updates regarding drinking water standards and efforts taken to reduce the levels of PFOA and PFOS in your drinking water. For more information regarding the EPA Health Advisory and Rome’s drinking water, please visit: <https://www.rome.ga.us/195/WaterSewer-Division.com>.