

Water Filtration | Frequently Asked Questions



Please note this information only pertains to homeowners that live within the Twin Cities east metro communities that are part of the 2018 Minnesota 3M PFAS settlement.

How will I know if my private well needs treatment (a filter)?

After reviewing the lab results, the Minnesota Health Department (MDH) will issue a well advisory if your water exceeds the level of health concern. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) will contact you to offer free bottled water services until a permanent solution is in place. If a municipal water line exists in front of your home, you will be reimbursed for the cost of connecting to city water. If you cannot be connected to city water, a granulated activated carbon (GAC) filter will be installed in your home and maintained by MPCA in perpetuity.

What is the process and schedule for granulated activated carbon (GAC) filter installs?

The MPCA will mail or e-mail an access agreement necessary to schedule the installation. Bottled water will be delivered free of charge until the filter is installed. GAC filters installed for well advisories are scheduled in order of returned access agreements. Once we receive the signed access agreement, you will be placed on the list and our installers will contact you for scheduling 2-3 weeks prior to installation.

How does the filter work?

Your well water is pumped through two canisters containing granulated activated carbon. The PFAS is removed from the water by a physical mass transfer process. Carbon filtration is a well-studied process and is effective at filtering PFAS when maintained properly.

[Water Treatment Using Carbon Filters: GAC Filter Information \(Minnesota Department of Health\)](#)

How does the MPCA know if the filter works or is working?

The MDH and the MPCA monitor and test our GAC filters and ensure their effectiveness by servicing the filters with a new canister of virgin carbon every year. Over the last 15+ years, the filters have demonstrated that they are effectively removing PFAS to below the level of health concern. The MPCA has conducted performance testing on several residential filters to confirm their effectiveness, and will continue to do so on an as-needed basis.

Who pays for the GAC filter and how is it maintained?

The 3M Settlement covers the whole-house filter, the installation, and the annual service/exchange costs. Repairs and replacements are also paid for by the 3M Settlement. Residents can contact the MPCA or our GAC filter installer for service issues. The yearly canister exchanges are completed at no charge to residents and well before the end of the filter's service life to enhance confidence that the filter is always working efficiently.

What if additional work is needed to install the GAC filter system?

The MPCA and our GAC filter installers will work with residents to make sure the system is installed properly with as little modification as possible. Any costs incurred performing reasonable, additional work will be paid for by the 3M Settlement.

Are the GAC filters used to treat city water different than the ones used to treat private wells?

Municipal treatment systems in the East Metro use the same GAC filter design and principles, but at a much larger scale.

What should I disclose about the filter if I sell my house?

Because the MDH has issued a well advisory for PFAS contamination above a level of health concern, you must notify your realtor that the MPCA has installed a GAC filter on your well. A new buyer should also be aware that the MPCA needs yearly access to the filter system to continue replacing the carbon canisters. This information should be written in the disclosure, along with the MPCA contact information. A new buyer can contact the MPCA with all other questions regarding previous testing, results, and our overall confidence in the GAC filter system's continued removal of PFAS below the level of health concern.

Why is my water cloudy after my filter was installed?

This is not unusual, and your water will clear up once the small carbon particles of the filter flush through with continued use.

Contacts:

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