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PFAS *from AI*

swell, which will receive surface water source testing.

Fourteen other drinking water systems around Lane County will also be part of the project.

OHA is testing public water systems in Oregon identified as "at risk" due to their proximity to a known or suspected PFAS use or contamination site, though did not specify why individual sites were chosen.

Known as "forever chemicals," PFAS describes a large class of more than 4,000 chemical compounds that have been used since the 1940s for a wide range of consumer and industrial products, including water-resistant clothing, paper manufacturing and firefighting foam.

Many of the chemicals do not easily break down or degrade, meaning they can contaminate soil and groundwater. As the chemicals can be quite mobile, they may also affect the safety of drinking water.

Because they are not regulated as hazardous substances by the federal government, PFAS usage areas are also difficult to track.

PFAS' water- and grease-resistant properties have made them popular for use in consumer products such as a nonstick cookware, food packaging and cleaning products. Industrial and firefighting uses are among the most significant sources of know PFAS contamination.

Since the 1990s, studies have been finding negative health effects related to

high levels of exposure to the chemicals, however not all of these studies involved the same groups of people, the same type of exposure or even the same PFAS.

A 2018 review of PFAS health effects in the Journal of Exposure Science and Environmental Epidemiology pointed to the need for additional research to better understand exposure pathways and health outcomes as the toxicity of new and emerging PFAS in ecosystems and humans is poorly understood.

"The magnitude of potential health impacts associated with exposure has not been quantified and such information is generally considered necessary to engage in risk mitigation actions," the authors state.

The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention also reports that while more studies are necessary, it is known that certain PFAS may lead to increased cholesterol levels, changes in liver enzymes, small decreases in infant birth weights, decreased vaccine response in children, increased risk of high blood pressure or pre-eclampsia in pregnant women and increased risks of kidney or testicular cancer.

PFAS can be very persistent in the human body, some chemicals lasting for up to eight years, thus increasing the chances of accumulation.

In the 2000s, chemical manufacturers voluntarily phased out two commonly used PFAS compounds, perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA). The two chemicals were of particular concern because were shown to be present in people and persistent in the environment, where they do not break down and can move through soils to contaminate drinking water.

These two chemicals

were replaced with versions of PFAS thought to be less persistent and toxic.

OHA states that PFAS can be found in the blood of people and animals worldwide and are present in a variety of food products and the environment.

"Researchers are still studying the extent of human exposure from these types of PFAS sources," states the agency on its website. "If tested, most people in the U.S. would have PFAS measured in their blood. Since there are no health-based screening levels for specific PFAS, health care providers cannot interpret blood tests to say what the results mean for health."

Contamination of drinking water is the most concerning method of exposure to the public, but many other methods exist as well: eating food packaged in material that contains PFAS or consuming items that touch grease-resistant coatings such as wrappers, to-go boxes, and pre-packaged microwaveable foods; using some consumer products such as non-stick cookware, stain resistant carpeting, and water repellant clothing; or accidentally swallowing contaminated soil or dust.

Even some food sources can be contaminated.

Some plants, such as grasses, can absorb contamination when they are fertilized with PFAS-containing biosolids from wastewater treatment plants. This has resulted in cows producing contaminated milk in some dairy farms in the U.S.

There is also evidence that when surface water is contaminated, certain PFAS compounds can bioaccumulate in fish. Several states have issued fish advisories in bodies of water where fish have been affected by contamination.

The purpose of OHA's sampling project is to make sure customers are not being exposed to potentially harmful PFAS chemicals in their drinking water.

There will be no cost to the operators of the water systems as the analysis is being paid for through an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) laboratory will analyze drinking water samples for 25 PFAS compounds, a marked increase from the number of chemicals previously targeted.

Between 2013 and 2015, OHA oversaw an EPA monitoring program which tested all larger and several smaller public drinking systems in the state for six PFAS. Of the 65 systems, none were reported to have detectable levels of the chemicals at the time.

OHA has developed its own health advisory levels for PFAS in drinking water which are lower than the EPA's. The Oregon agency looks specifically at four PFAS compounds most commonly found in humans, setting its health advisory limit at 30 parts per million for the sum of all four chemicals.

If an analysis exceeds this limit, OHA will notify public water system operators, though health advisories are non-regulatory and it is up to the operators to notify their customers.

"As of today, no major source of PFAS has been found in Oregon that would create regular exposure for Oregonians," states the DEQ on its website.

OHA website: www.oregon.gov/oha
DEQ website: www.oregon.gov/deq
PFAS Fact Sheet: www.oregon.gov/deq/Hazards-and-Cleanup/Documents/PFASFactSheet.pdf

2021 Cottage Grove Community Grant application is now available and due on **November 23, 2021**.

Grant awards will be announced February 2022. For information, contact the Cottage Grove Community Foundation office at **cgcfoundation.org** or **541-942-0014**. Any IRS approved non-profit organization is eligible to apply.

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The City of Cottage Grove Public Works Department will be conducting its annual Leaf Pickup during the following weeks:

**October 25th - 29th • November 15th - 19th
December 13th - 17th**

Tips for Leaf Placement in Street

- ✓ Only piles of loose leaves will be picked up
- ✓ Pile leaves on the street surface near the gutter, keeping gutter and catch basins free of leaves so storm water is not obstructed
- ✓ On streets without curbs and gutter, pile the leaves near the street surface away from ditches
- ✓ Stack the leaves so that they don't block bike and traffic lanes
- ✓ Leaves should be piled in rows so they do not block the flow of water along the curb and do not encroach on the traffic lane
- ✓ Do **not** place leaves in the streets where curbside parking does not exist. You may bring those leaves to the designated area outside the Row River Water Treatment Plant at 3300 Row River Road
- ✓ Do **not** place your leaves in plastic bags
- ✓ Branches will **not** be picked up
- ✓ Shrub prunings and blackberry vines will **not** be picked up
- ✓ Do **not** include rocks, metal or other debris in your leaf pile
- ✓ Lawn clippings will **not** be picked up

For more information please contact the Public Works Department at (541)767-4100 during working hours of Monday through Friday, 8:00AM to 5:00PM.