MARIPOSA PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT (MPUD)

Feasibility Study to Address PFAS Contamination



THE CHALLENGE

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS, commonly referred to as “forever chemicals”) were first detected in MPUD Well 06 in 2024, and later in IW Well 01 in 2025. MPUD Well 06 supplies drinking water to the Town and Smith Road areas, while IW Well 01 supplies to the Idle Wheels area. MPUD is evaluating options to address PFAS and maintain reliable drinking water service.

WHAT ARE PFAS?

- PFAS are a large group of **human-made chemicals** used in many industries and consumer products (for instance, water-repellent materials, some personal care products, and others).

- PFAS are often called **“forever chemicals”** because they do not break down easily and can **remain in the environment for a very long time**.

- The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the State of California are increasing efforts to address PFAS in drinking water. The U.S. EPA has established **maximum contaminant levels (MCLs)** for certain PFAS. California has **notification and response levels** for certain PFAS. MPUD must meet applicable federal PFAS MCLs by 2031. California has separate notification and response requirements.

WHAT IS MPUD DOING TO ADDRESS PFAS?

A Feasibility Study funded by the State Water Resources Control Board’s Division of Financial Assistance evaluated four alternatives to address PFAS at MPUD:

01 **Alternative 1:**
PFAS Treatment at wellhead using Ion Exchange (IX)

02 **Alternative 2:**
PFAS Treatment at wellhead using Granular Activated Carbon (GAC)

03 **Alternative 3:**
Development of replacement wells

04 **Alternative 4:**
Consolidation with a nearby water system

Alternative 1 (IX) could treat PFAS at both IW Well 01 and MPUD Well 06.

Alternative 2 (GAC) could be used at IW Well 01 but is not feasible at MPUD Well 06 because of limited site space.

Alternative 3 (Replacement Wells) would involve drilling and testing two replacement wells to confirm adequate water supply and quality, and whether treatment would be needed.

Alternative 4 would connect MPUD to a nearby water system, but neighboring systems have limited capacity, making consolidation less suitable.

An in-depth analysis of all four alternatives is available in the Feasibility Study Report.

Questions? Contact MPUD ✉ mpudoffice@sti.net ☎ (209) 966-2515

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WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Here is how MPUD plans to move forward.

2026	**Complete the feasibility study**
2027	**Apply for funding** and plan next steps
2028–30	If funding is secured, **design and build a solution**
By 2031	**Meet federal PFAS drinking water limits**

Schedule is preliminary and depends on funding, approvals, and project decisions.

HELPFUL INFORMATION ABOUT PFAS

Where did PFAS come from?

There are several potential sources in the area including a landfill, presence of a fire training area, and septic tanks. Based on the hydrogeology of the area, we suspect it may be coming from septic tanks.

Can PFAS affect human health?

Exposure to unsafe levels of PFAS may result in adverse health effects including liver damage, effects on the immune system, cancer and developmental effects to fetuses during pregnancy.

How could PFAS be treated?

Granular activated carbon (GAC) and ion exchange (IX) are established PFAS treatment technologies used in the U.S. Both were evaluated in the study.

How would this be funded?

MPUD plans to pursue State and Federal grants for planning and construction to address PFAS exceedance. These grants would not cover ongoing operation and maintenance costs.

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