

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



Olympic View Water and Sewer District is taking action to protect the quality of the public's drinking water from unsafe levels of toxic PFAS chemicals that have been detected at the Madrona School site, posing a future threat to our community's water supply. After extensive efforts to collaborate with the Edmonds School District were ignored, we had to resort to legal action to ensure the safety of the public's water.

This FAQ document provides critical information on PFAS contamination at Madrona School, the steps we are taking, and how you can stay informed.

### **Where does my drinking water come from?**

Your drinking water comes from two primary sources. Approximately 60% is supplied by Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) from the South Fork Tolt River Watershed and the Cedar River Watershed. Both are protected and remote areas in the Cascade Mountains. These watersheds are strictly managed by SPU, which enforces robust protection measures, prohibiting agricultural, industrial, or recreational activities. The remaining water comes from Deer Creek, a spring-fed stream in the Town of Woodway, which has served the community for over a century. Madrona School's stormwater wells drain into the ground above the Deer Creek aquifer, which is within the zone of contribution for the OVWSD's water source, and risks contaminating the water supply.

### **Is my drinking water safe?**

Yes, Olympic View's drinking water remains safe. Our water is routinely monitored, adhering to federal and state regulations. Recent testing of approximately 200 compounds in your water showed no contaminants exceeding the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) allowable limits. Our concern with PFAS at the Madrona School is about protecting the future purity of OVWSD's water supply.

### **What are PFAS, and why are they a concern?**

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of man-made chemicals used since the 1950s in various consumer products like food packaging, non-stick cookware, and water-resistant fabrics. They are also found in certain firefighting foams. PFAS are known to persist in the environment and have been linked to significant health risks, including developmental issues, immune system effects, and an increased risk of certain cancers.

### **What is the PFAS issue at Madrona School?**

In 2022, Olympic View detected unsafe PFAS levels in stormwater samples from the Madrona School site. Follow-up testing by the Edmonds School District in 2023 and 2024 continued to show elevated PFAS concentrations. Communications from the Washington Department of Ecology in 2024 to investigate the source of the PFAS contamination has resulted in limited action by the school and has left the problem unresolved.

In 2025, soil samples from Madrona School's bioretention planters—areas designed to manage stormwater—revealed unsafe PFAS concentrations. The Department of Ecology has since requested corrective action, recommending soil removal, further sampling, and "first flush" monitoring in fall 2025.

### **Could PFAS from Madrona School contaminate my drinking water?**

Your drinking water is currently safe. However, the PFAS contamination at Madrona School poses a potential long-term threat to the quality of Olympic View's water supply, prompting proactive action to safeguard your water.



### **Why is Olympic View Water and Sewer District filing a Citizen Suit?**

Despite being aware of the PFAS contamination since 2023, the Edmonds School District has failed to take effective action to prevent PFAS from entering the school's underground injection control (UIC) wells. Olympic View's repeated efforts to resolve the issue collaboratively have been met with resistance, leaving legal action as the only alternative.

### **What is a Citizen Suit?**

A Citizen Suit is a legal mechanism that allows individuals or entities to sue for the enforcement of environmental laws, when corporations and government bodies fail to comply.

### **Is there a solution to the PFAS problem at Madrona School?**

Yes. Olympic View has provided the Edmonds School District with preliminary engineering designs for two alternative drainage solutions that could immediately address the PFAS risk to the water supply.

### **What are the next steps?**

The Notice of Intent letter gives the Edmonds School District 60 days to comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act and Washington State's UIC well regulations. If compliance is not achieved, Olympic View intends to file a formal lawsuit under the Citizen Suit provisions.

### **Where can I learn more about PFAS?**

To Learn more, visit the Washington Department of Health PFAS page:

[PFAS | Washington State Department of Health](#)

To learn what Olympic View is doing to safeguard your drinking water from PFAS visit:

[www.olympicviewwater.com/info-and-resources/pfas-information/](http://www.olympicviewwater.com/info-and-resources/pfas-information/)