

# Chromium-6

## (Hexavalent Chromium)

**What is it?** The Chromium-6 found in our water is *naturally occurring*. Chromium is a metal found in natural deposits of ores containing other elements, mostly chrome-iron ore. It is also widely present in soil and plants. Chromium-6 occurs as a result of oxidization and appears naturally in many groundwater locations throughout California. The Chromium-6 found in our water is *not* the result of industrial activity, additives, or any activity of the District.

**Why is this news?** While the federal maximum level is still 100 parts per billion (ppb), in 2014 the California Department of Public Health changed the Drinking Water Standard for Chromium-6 from 50 ppb to 10 ppb. This caused many water agencies to be out of compliance with water quality standards. As a result, agencies are required to issue notice to their customers stating the agency is in violation of drinking water standards. Consequently, many customers have become alarmed even though the water is still the same as it has been for many years. *Our water quality has not changed; the drinking water standards have changed.*

**How much is in our water?** Chromium-6 has been detected in five of our best producing wells. The levels average 10-18 ppb which exceeds the *new* Drinking Water Standards for the State of California. This violation was noticed in the annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) distributed to customers in June of 2015 for the 2014 reporting period.

**What is the District doing?** The District has a plan to bring water from wells that do not contain Chromium-6 and blend it with water from the wells containing Chromium-6. This would dilute the amount of Chromium-6 to levels in compliance with the new standard. This plan is the most cost effective mitigation method and has been reviewed and approved by the State Water Resources Control Board's Division of Drinking Water. Funding for the project was recently approved as part of the District's new rate schedule.

**What should I do?** This is not an emergency. Our water quality has not changed from what it was; the drinking water standards have changed. If you have health issues or other concerns, you may wish to consult a doctor. If you wish to avoid drinking the water provided by our system, use alternative water for drinking and cooking.

## Where can I find more information?

Chromium-6 Regulation Information: [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\\_water/certlic/drinkingwater/Chromium6.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/Chromium6.shtml)

General Chromium-6 Information: <http://www.epa.gov/dwstandardsregulations/chromium-drinking-water>

Information on the District's Chromium-6 Mitigation Project: <https://www.pphcsd.org/projects.html>

Consumer Confidence Report: [https://www.pphcsd.org/PPHCSD%20CCR%202014%208\\_5%20x%2011.pdf](https://www.pphcsd.org/PPHCSD%20CCR%202014%208_5%20x%2011.pdf)