

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

The average level of naturally occurring hexavalent chromium (chrome-6) in our groundwater wells is 3.2 ppb (part per billion) and ranges from undetectable to 17 ppb. Routine water monitoring shows that three of our 18 groundwater wells — specifically three wells located in the Seascape area — contain chrome-6 above the NEW state standard of 10 ppb.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

- On October 1, 2024, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) adopted a new maximum contaminant level (MCL) for chrome-6 of 10 parts per billion (ppb). For perspective, one ppb is about one drop of water in an olympic-size (660,000-gallon) swimming pool.
- **A water system of our size is not considered in violation of the chrome-6 MCL until after October 1, 2026.** The SWRCB requires us to notify you even though there is a compliance timeline in place.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

**This is NOT an emergency — your water is still safe to drink.** In an emergency, we notify customers immediately. Per state regulations you do not need to use an alternative water supply like bottled water. However, some people who drink water with high levels of chrome-6 over many years may have an increased risk of cancer. If you have health issues and are concerned with the consumption of this water, you may wish to consult your doctor.

## WHAT IS BEING DONE?

The District is working with SWRCB to address the exceedance and comply with the MCL. We have completed a chrome-6 compliance plan, conducted a pilot study, and are currently designing a treatment facility to remove chrome-6 from these three wells.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit [soquelcreekwater.org/chrome6](http://soquelcreekwater.org/chrome6) or contact Cara Clark, Water Quality Compliance Coordinator at [carac@soquelcreekwater.org](mailto:carac@soquelcreekwater.org) or 831-475-8500 x138

## WHAT IS CHROME-6?

### Where does chrome-6 come from?

Chromium is a naturally occurring metallic element found in rocks, soil, plants, volcanic dust, and even animals. In our area, chromium is present in the rocks and sediments of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Basin, especially in the Aromas Red Sands aquifer.

### What's the difference between chromium-3 and chrome 6?

Chromium can exist in different forms. Chromium-3 (trivalent chromium) is a nutrient that the body needs in very small amounts to help with things like processing sugar and fat. Chrome-6 is a form that can occur naturally but is considered toxic when people are exposed to it at extremely high levels.

### How does chrome-6 get into groundwater?

Over time, rocks and sediments containing chromium-3 break down, causing that element to be naturally converted to chrome-6, which then seeps into groundwater supplies like ours.

**What is California doing about it?** Over the past decade, California has set, repealed, and re-evaluated an MCL specifically for chrome-6 to lower the exposure to this contaminant. California is the only place in the world with a specific drinking water standard for chrome-6.

## AVISO

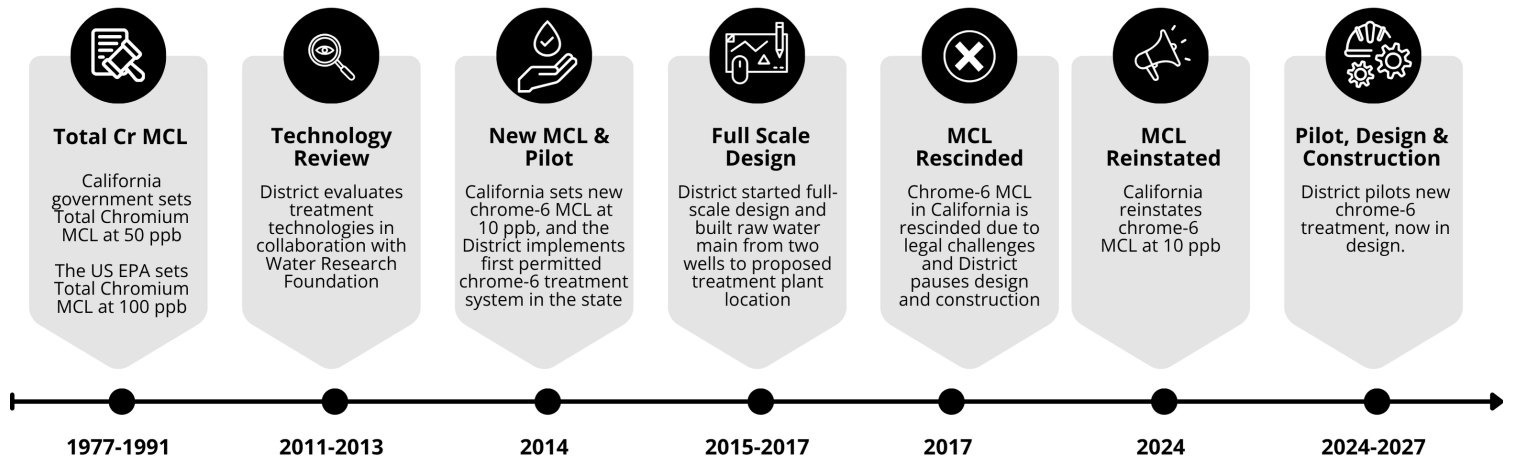
Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua potable. Tradúzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien. Visite [www.soquelcreekwater.org/chrome6](http://www.soquelcreekwater.org/chrome6)

## WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

- Your water is still safe to drink.
- We are working towards a permanent long-term solution.

The District has led California in chrome-6 solutions for over a decade and has a long history of proactively addressing regulations both past and present. We are one out of approximately 129 water systems in the state that have levels over the NEW limit.

## CHROME-6 TIMELINE



## COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOLS, RENTAL PROPERTY OWNERS AND BUSINESSES

If you are a school or school system, the owner or operator of residential rental property, or the owner or operator of a business property, then you are legally required to notify the following people of the information in this notice within ten days of your receipt of this notice:

- **Schools:** You must notify school employees, students, and parents (if the students are minors).
- **Residential Rental Property Owners or Managers (including nursing homes and care facilities):** You must notify tenants.
- **Business Property Owners, Managers, or Operators:** You must notify employees of businesses located on the property.

If you fail to notify the above people, you shall be civilly liable up to \$1,000 per day for each day that you fail to notify them. (Health & Saf. Code, §§ 116450, subd. (g); 116650, subd. (e).)

*Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this public notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.*



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**You will receive this same notice quarterly per State regulations until we are in compliance.**