

Reverse Osmosis Under-Sink Systems for PFAS Removal

Frequently Asked Questions

To request installation, call 910-678-1101. To request service or report a problem with your reverse osmosis system, please call (910) 678-1101.

What is a reverse osmosis (RO) system?

Reverse Osmosis is a water filtration system that removes specific elements and compounds from water.

Why was a RO system selected to be installed in my residence?

Your water well was tested for certain PFAS compounds that Chemours is required to measure. The concentration of total PFAS either exceeded 70 nanograms per liter (ng/l) or parts per trillion (ppt), or an individual PFAS compound exceeded 10 ng/l in the water sample. The compound GenX may have been detected in your well, but it was found at a concentration below 140 ng/l. Based on the Consent Order signed with Chemours and entered by the court on February 25, 2019, your residence qualifies for up to three under-sink RO systems.

I have GenX with levels above 140 ng/l. Can I get RO systems instead of a granular activated carbon (GAC) whole-house filtration system?

If you have 140 ng/l or more of GenX in your well water supply, you can have a RO system installed at every kitchen or bathroom sink as an alternative to a whole house GAC system. The RO system is not a whole-house filter. Reverse Osmosis systems do not filter water supplied to other sink fixtures, showers and spigots.

Will the RO system provide all my water needs?

No. Each RO system will provide up to 50 gallons of water per unit per day. It is designed to provide water for consumption. The RO system will provide water for drinking, making coffee or tea, mixing baby formula, making ice, cooking, etc. The RO system does not produce enough water for bathing/showering, washing dishes or clothes, or outdoor use.

Will I have to pay for the RO system or installation or buy new plumbing?

No. The Consent Order states Chemours will pay for the RO systems, installation and maintenance/replacement of the systems for a period of at least 20 years, or until testing of the groundwater demonstrates that each PFAS listed in the Consent Order is below any applicable health advisory, whichever is longer. You will not have to provide any hardware or other materials for the installation or maintenance of the RO systems during that time period.

How long will it take to install the RO system?

Once you receive the letter from Chemours stating you qualify for RO systems, you must notify Chemours of your intent to accept installation by calling (910) 678-1101 and leaving a message with your name, phone number and residential address. All messages left at the (910) 678-1101 mailbox are reviewed and documented by Chemours and their contractors. You should expect to receive a call back within 24 hours confirming your acceptance of the RO system offer. RO systems are installed in the order of response. Your information will be relayed to Advanced Water System Group (AWS)-Kinetico, who is an authorized installer of Kinetico RO systems and will be installing the RO systems. The installer will contact you as soon as possible to schedule the install and answer additional questions. AWS-Kinetico will schedule a preliminary visit to confirm the areas you have selected for the installation, and their representative will answer any questions you have. After the preliminary visit, AWS-Kinetico staff will return for the installation itself, which will take a few hours. The installation is dependent on access to an area to install the system, which may require drilling through stone or tile countertops to place the RO faucet, and other factors.

Where will the RO system be installed?

The RO system selected will be installed in up to three areas of your home. The contractor will attempt to install the systems within a cabinet under the sink. In some instances where not enough space is available to install the system under the sink, the unit will be installed to be as unnoticeable as possible.

How does a RO system work?

The RO system proposed for use in your home has a series of filters and a specialized RO membrane. The system will remove sediment, iron and some other compounds (such as PFAS). The RO systems work by passing water through a special membrane.

Openings on the membrane are so small that water molecules are almost the only compound that can pass through. Information on how RO systems work and their application to PFAS contamination can be found at the links at the bottom of this factsheet.



Will I be able to contact someone if there are problems or my filters need replacing?

Yes. You will be provided a contact number for the RO system installation contractor (AWS-Kinetico). The installation contractor will call back within 24 hours. The contractor will also respond to any maintenance issues or problems with the RO systems.

How do I know the RO system will work to remove the PFAS?

Although the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality has not conducted any studies on home RO systems to determine their effectiveness at removing PFAS contamination, previous research by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and others identified RO systems as an accepted method for reducing PFAS concentrations in well water. For more information, see the links at the bottom. Based on the Consent Order, testing of water at some residences will be conducted on a regular basis to ensure PFAS compounds are being removed by the RO systems.

How will I know when it is time to replace the RO membrane and/or filters?

The RO systems have two mechanisms to let you know it is time for replacement. First, the water from the system faucet will slow to a trickle. Second, a blue indicator will become harder to see in the sight tube. When either or both occur, you will need to call the number provided by the RO system installer who will then contact you to schedule an appointment to replace the filter and membrane.

Are there any common problems or issues that I might encounter with the RO systems? How will they be resolved?

Reverse osmosis systems have been widely used to remedy PFAS and other water quality issues. A RO system can decrease the pH of the water – making it more acidic. In addition to removing unwanted chemicals from your water, RO systems also remove beneficial compounds. The RO systems selected for your home have a remineralization feature that will help balance the pH to reduce corrosion problems and provide the benefits of these essential minerals. While this is not a problem related to the quality of water produced by the RO system, it should be noted that installation of the system will require the installer to drill a small hole in the sink to install the RO faucet. This will include drilling a hole through any stone counter tops extending over the splash area of the sink where the faucet will be installed.

Where can I get more information on this?

More information on PFAS and RO systems are available at the following websites:

- Kinetico: <https://www.kineticonc.com/>
- EPA Drinking Water Treatability Database: <https://iaspub.epa.gov/tdb/pages/contaminantProcess/contaminantProcessOverview.do>
- ITRC Remediation Technologies and Methods for PFAS https://pfas-1.itrcweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/pfas_fact_sheet_remediation_3_15_18.pdf



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<https://deq.nc.gov/news/key-issues/genx-investigation>