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Chromium-6 Drinking Water Standard Set to Become Effective July 1

Submitted by Pamela Martineau on Tue, 06/03/2014 - 2:42pm in [Water Quality](#) All [Water News](#)

The nation's first drinking water standard for hexavalent chromium – or chromium-6 – is set to become effective in California on July 1 following approval of final regulations by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL), officials with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) announced today.



The regulations set the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for chromium-6 at 10 parts per billion (ppb). That MCL is one fifth the current total chromium standard in California of 50 ppb, which includes both trivalent chromium (chromium-3) and chromium-6. The federal MCL for total chromium is 100 ppb.

"California is the first and only state in the nation to establish a maximum contaminant level specifically for chromium-6 in drinking water," Dr. Ron Chapman, director and public health officer of CDPH said in a written statement. "Establishing this maximum contaminant level (MCL) underscores California's commitment to safe drinking water standards to protect the public health."

Chromium-3 is less toxic than chromium-6 and is an essential nutrient at low dosages. Chromium-6 may pose a risk of cancer when ingested.

In 2001, California adopted a law requiring an MCL for chromium-6. In recommending an MCL, CDPH performed a series of analyses that considered, among other things: the occurrence of chromium-6 in drinking water sources statewide; the methods, feasibility and costs of detection; and treatment and monitoring technology. The department also considered extensive public comment from public and private stakeholders during the regulatory process, including from public water systems.

CDPH considered more than 18,000 public comments on the proposed standard before submitting a final proposal for approval. The state's Drinking Water Program will review the chromium-6 MCL at least every five years after its adoption.

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The California Manufacturers & Technology Association and the Solano County Taxpayers Association's last month jointly filed suit challenging the chromium-6 MCL. The groups say the MCL is unnecessary and will be too costly to taxpayers to implement.

More information about the chromium-6 MCL is available at the CDPH's website on the [chromium-6 page](#).

ACWA also provides resources on its [website](#) for use by member agencies in communicating with the public about this proposed new standard. Questions may be directed to Adam Walukiewicz, ACWA regulatory advocate, at adamw@acwa.com or call 916-441-4545.

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