



For Media Inquiries:
Amanda Phillips
Phone: (407) 571-8031
Email: APhillips@Altamonte.org

For Immediate Release

City of Altamonte Springs Drinking Water Shows No Detection of 1,4-dioxane or “Forever Chemicals”

Altamonte Springs, Fla. August 14, 2023 – Over the past month, the Orlando Sentinel published a series of articles relating to 1,4-dioxane contamination in the Lake Mary, Sanford, and northwest Seminole County area. It is a serious and newsworthy issue anytime there is groundwater contamination. In some of the Orlando Sentinel's articles, the geographic references simply referred to Seminole County. As a result, many Altamonte Springs residents grew concerned that groundwater contamination was in all Seminole County groundwater and drinking wells rather than in the confined area of northwest Seminole County.

In 2014, every utility in the United States – including the City of Altamonte Springs utility – was mandated to test for 1,4-dioxane, among other chemicals. At that time, 1,4-dioxane was non-detected in our water. That is not surprising because Altamonte Springs is at a higher elevation than Lake Mary and the water table flows away from us. But the primary reason that we do not have 1,4-dioxane in our water system is because Altamonte Springs never had significant manufacturing industries in the City.

Because of the Orlando Sentinel's articles, we received a number of phone calls from residents and water customers who were concerned that the contamination that is the subject of the articles was also in other parts of Seminole County, like in Altamonte Springs. Therefore, we tested our water again for 1,4-dioxane to put our residents' and water customers' minds at ease.

We are pleased to confirm for our residents and water customers that the City of Altamonte Springs' drinking water showed no detection of 1,4-dioxane.

There has also been some discussion about perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances commonly referred to as PFAS or “forever chemicals.” PFAS's are a group of chemicals used to make fluoropolymer coatings and products that resist heat, oil, stains, grease and water. Every public and private water utility in the United States was mandated to run these tests, including the City of Altamonte Springs, which ran those tests in March of 2023 at both water treatment plants.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) uses the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR) to collect data for contaminants of potential concern that are suspected to be

present in drinking water and for which the EPA does not have health-based standards set under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The UCMR provides EPA and other interested parties with scientifically valid data on the occurrence of contaminants suspected to be present in drinking water but that do not have health-based standards set under the SDWA.

The fifth round of sampling under the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule, known as UCMR 5, was published on December 27, 2021. UCMR 5 requires sample collection and testing for thirty chemical contaminants and mandates those tests be performed between 2023 and 2025 using analytical methods developed by EPA and consensus organizations, including sampling unregulated compounds of interest and many PFAS compounds. All compounds analyzed in UCMR 5 were below the federal Method Reporting Limit as established by the EPA. A Reporting Limit (RL) is defined as the “smallest concentration of a chemical that can be reported by a laboratory.”

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Testing confirmed that PFAS compounds were not detected in the City of Altamonte Springs' water.

“We are pleased to confirm for our water customers and residents that the City of Altamonte Springs' drinking water showed no detection of 1,4-dioxane or forever chemicals,” said Altamonte Springs City Manager Frank Martz. “We work hard every day to make sure our residents' lives are made better for generations to come. Providing clean water is part of our mission.”

Our environment is precious. Altamonte Springs is one of the most innovative cities in the world, particularly with regard to environmental innovation and education. The City built one of only three 1 megawatt floating solar arrays in the United States, and on sunny days, 70% of our regional wastewater plant runs by using sustainable solar power. Altamonte Springs also won an international innovation award in Tokyo, Japan for pureALTA – a pilot in which reclaimed water is treated to drinking water standards. To add to the innovation arsenal, the Altamonte Springs Science Incubator (AS₂I) was created in 2012, providing free STEM education to more than 17,000 Seminole County middle and high school students. Protecting the environment is not our only priority; educating and preparing students to compete in an ever-changing world is a central part of our environmental program.

“We have created an innovative, debt-free community in Altamonte Springs, one that now competes on the national stage,” said Altamonte Springs Mayor Pat Bates. “The City of Altamonte Springs is ranked by WalletHub as the 19th Best Small City in the United States for Starting a Business. Our City was one of only three cities in Florida (and the only city in Central Florida) to be ranked in the Top 50 cities to live by Money Magazine. And Altamonte Springs was ranked the No. 1 Best Suburb for Young Professionals in Seminole County and No. 14 best in Florida for young professionals in the State of Florida by Niche.com.”

About the City of Altamonte Springs

Altamonte Springs is a city born of innovation, fiscal responsibility and progressive ideas. The City is completely debt free and maintains one of the lowest tax rates in Florida. City leadership, staff, residents and local businesses share a vision of making Altamonte Springs

the best place in Florida to live, work, raise a family, earn a degree, seek medical care, build a business and more. Few locations in the state offer the robust services Altamonte Springs provides at such a low cost. From forward-thinking projects and proactive initiatives to an evolving business climate and environmentally-friendly projects, Altamonte Springs has set an example for other municipalities by striving to work beyond the typical constraints of local government.

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The City has a perfect blend of community spirit and bustling activities that help create a wholesome environment for residents and visitors alike. Residential tree-lined streets and beautiful, natural parks reflect the charming and unique character of what locals call home. Not to mention, the City's robust events program is the most exciting in the region; all generously funded by the area's corporate sponsors. Hosting more than one million visitors each year, Altamonte Springs' programs infuse into the community a sense of excitement and entertainment, while enriching its diverse social fabric.

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