

Bottled water available to Picatinny residents, employees

Public Service Announcement

Bottled water is now available to employees and residents of Picatinny Arsenal for pickup at either fire station.

The bottled water should be used as a substitute for Picatinny fountain and faucet water for drinking, food preparation and oral hygiene.

The Army has an ongoing effort to sample drinking water supplies for the presence of the chemicals perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA). This sampling is being conducted to ensure that PFOA and PFOS are not present at levels which exceed the Lifetime Health Advisory (LHA) level of 70 parts per trillion (ppt) established by the U.S. Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA) in May 2016.

Drinking water samples at Picatinny Arsenal exceed the EPA LHA level of 70 ppt based on sampling results in March 2018. In 2013, similar testing to comply with Safe Drinking Water Act program requirements did not identify PFOS/PFOA levels above the EPA LHA. The Army is analyzing confirmatory samples collected in late March 2018 and expects those results on or before 16 April.

PFAS, or pre- and perfluoroalkyl substances, are a family of manmade chemicals that have been used for many years to make products that resist heat, stains, grease and water. PFOS and PFOA are the two most common PFAS found in contaminated

food, water, and soil. These chemicals do not break down easily in people, wildlife, or the environment, and therefore levels tend to build up in blood and tissues over time. Studies show that nearly all people in the U.S. population have PFAS in their blood, regardless of age.

It is important to note that the Lifetime Health Advisory level established by the EPA represents 1) a level of exposure that would not be expected to produce adverse health effects with daily consumption over an entire lifetime. 2) the amount of PFOS and PFOA you could consume in drinking water each day over the course of a 70-year lifetime that would not be expected to produce adverse health effects. Further, LHA

levels include a significant margin of safety to ensure they are protective of even the most sensitive sub-populations; in this case, the developing fetus and breastfed infants. Also, the EPA LHA levels for drinking water assumes that individuals are exposed to PFOS/PFOA from other sources.

If you have concerns about your health or the health of your children please contact your primary healthcare provider or your child's pediatrician. For more detailed information about PFAS, please see the attached list of frequently asked questions. For specific questions about the sampling that was conducted at Picatinny Arsenal, please contact Mike Maier, Public Works, at 973-724-4561.

Picatinny history: Who was Lt. Col. Francis H. Parker?

BY MATTHEW H. WARD

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Lt. Col. Francis Henry Parker was a career United States Army officer who served from 1861 to 1897. Parker was a career Ordnance officer and American Civil War Veteran. During his career, he commanded nine arsenals and depots throughout the United States, including what would become Picatinny Arsenal.

Francis H. Parker was born in 1838 in Owego, New York, to John Mason Parker and his first wife, Catherine Ann (née) Pumphely. The Parker's parents were primarily of British heritage and traced their origins in America back to the British colonies.

His father, John Mason Parker, was a graduate of Middlebury College in Vermont, who studied and practiced law in Owego. He later served as a United States Congressman from 1854 to 1859, and New York Supreme Court Justice from 1859 to his death in 1873.

Parker graduated from West Point in June of 1861, and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Dragoons. Soon after graduation, Parker and most of his class reported for duty in both the Union and Confederate armies during the Civil War.

His West Point classmates included, Alonzo H. Cushing, a Medal of Honor recipient, who was killed at the 1863 Battle of Gettysburg; George A. Custer, one of the youngest Union generals during the Civil War, who was killed at the 1876 Battle of Little Big Horn; and Daniel W. Flagler, the 9th Chief of Ordnance for the United States Army from 1891 to 1899.



Lt. Col. Francis H. Parker was a career Army officer who commanded nine arsenals and depots throughout the United States, including what would become Picatinny Arsenal.

During the Civil War, he served in the Army of the Potomac, commanded by Union Gen. George B. McClellan. Parker served in the field with the army from the First Battle of Bull Run (also known as Manassas) on July 21, 1861 through the Battle of Antietam (also known as Sharpsburg) on September 17, 1862.

After Antietam, the recently appointed ordnance officer was responsible for shifting the ammunition train to Frederick, Maryland, and establishing a depot there. Between 1862 and 1865, Parker served at the St. Louis Arsenal in Missouri, the Watervliet Arsenal

in New York, the Cincinnati Ordnance Depot in Ohio, and the Army's Ordnance Depot at City Point in Virginia.

He also received valuable field service as the Chief of Ordnance for the Army of the Tennessee in 1863 and Chief Ordnance Officer for the Army of the Potomac in 1864.

After the war, Parker stayed in the Army and played a significant role in the Ordnance Corp. In 1880, he was a key part of the planning process and early construction of what would later be called Picatinny Arsenal.

He was responsible for the negotiation of real estate purchases, and served as the Picatinny Powder Depot's first commanding officer. In this role, he oversaw the construction of the depot's first buildings, including Building 307 (originally known as Magazine No. 1). Parker's time at Picatinny Powder Depot ended in April of 1883, when Major Joseph P. Farley reported and assumed command of the depot.

After his duty at Picatinny Powder Depot, Parker transferred to Watervliet Arsenal in New York. In 1887, he served on a board that designated Watervliet Arsenal as the best location to manufacture large caliber cannons.

His experience in gun manufacturing thrust him into command of the arsenal in 1889, a position he would hold until 1892. His accomplishments as arsenal commander included improvements to the arsenal's infrastructure, such as the construction of a steam-powered electric plant and the addition of the south wing of Building No. 110 ("The Big Gun Shop"), a large brick factory building that is still used in modern times.

In July of 1892, Parker's health took a turn for the worse. He was forced to take a six month leave of absence from Watervliet Arsenal to seek treatment at a sanatorium in western New York, where he was diagnosed with chronic pneumonia and tuberculosis. Despite being very ill, the career Army officer returned to the arsenal, and was eventually forced to resign as the arsenal's commander in December of 1892.

In July of 1893, Parker was transferred to Allegheny Arsenal in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania where he took command of the post. While serving as the arsenal's commander, he succumbed to his poor health and died on February 22, 1897.

He was survived by his wife, Augusta (née Abeel), and son, John Mason. Parker's remains were interred with those of his parent's in his hometown of Owego at Evergreen Cemetery.

Parker's contributions to the Ordnance Corp and United States Army were later recognized by Picatinny Arsenal and Ordnance Corps leadership.

On May 11, 1982, Building 93 at Picatinny Arsenal was dedicated and named after Parker, who had the post's main road previously named for him as well.

Parker was inducted into the Ordnance Corps' Hall of Fame in 2011 for his contributions to the corps during the nineteenth century.

Matthew Ward is an intelligence analyst at Picatinny Arsenal and has a degree in history. He has been assisting with cataloging the contents of the ARDEC Historian Archive.