

4th Avenue Well PFAS Mitigation Project

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



What is the 4th Avenue Well and why is it important?

The 4th Avenue Well is one of Salt Lake City's key groundwater sources. It usually operates during the summer to help meet higher water demand and maintain reliable water pressure in the downtown and Capitol Hill areas. When active, it can supply up to 6 million gallons of drinking water per day (enough to serve a population of 60,000-75,000 people).

What are PFAS and why is this well offline?

PFAS (short for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are a group of man-made chemicals used in products like firefighting foam, stain-resistant fabrics, and nonstick coatings. These chemicals are widespread in the environment and are being detected in many water sources nationwide.

During routine federal testing in 2023, PFAS were detected in the water from the 4th Avenue Well at levels above new EPA drinking water standards. As a result, SLCDPU took the well offline.

This means no PFAS-impacted water is being delivered to customers.

Is my drinking water safe?

Yes. SLCDPU continues to meet all state and federal drinking water standards. The 4th Avenue Well is not currently in use.

What work is happening now?

The current work is investigative.

A specialized team will take water samples from different depths in the well to understand:

- How PFAS is moving in the aquifer
- Working to identify the source of PFAS
- Whether only certain layers are affected
- Whether the well could be modified to avoid PFAS, or if a new well may be needed

The results will help the City choose the best long-term solution.

Will there be construction impacts?

Yes — temporarily. During the roughly five-week field work period, neighbors may see:

- Construction vehicles and crews
- A fenced work zone
- Temporary lane and sidewalk closures
- Normal construction noise during daytime working hours

This work does not involve major excavation or new above-ground structures.

How long will this phase last?

Approximately five weeks, scheduled for late fall/early winter 2025.
The City will share exact dates before work begins.

Why is SLCDPU doing this now?

Restoring high-quality and reliable water supply takes careful planning.
This phase helps the Department determine:

- Whether the well can be restored without PFAS
- Whether treatment is needed
- Or whether a new well location should be developed

Doing this work now helps protect long-term water supply reliability.

How is this different from the 2019 well upgrade project?

We recognize there was strong public concern during the 2019 project.
This current work is different in key ways:

2019 Project

- Permanent pump house construction
- Major above-ground structure changes
- Longer construction duration
- Designed to update electrical & mechanical systems

Current PFAS Work

- Temporary investigative work
- No new structure being built
- ~5 weeks total
- Designed to protect long-term water quality.

We are committed to being proactive, transparent, and respectful in how we communicate throughout this effort.

How can I get project updates or ask questions?

Project Email: 4thavewell@slc.gov

Project Hotline: 801-616-3336

To sign up for regular email updates about this project, please send an email with "Updates" in the subject line.
Project updates will also be shared:

- On the SLCDPU website
 - On SLCDPU social media channels
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How will SLCDPU use community feedback?

Because this phase is investigative, public input does not determine whether the sampling work occurs, but feedback can and will help shape:



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