

[Note: All FAQs may not be applicable to all systems that adopt the FAQs listed below. These are merely guideline and FAQ can be edited to align with individual system actions.]

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PFAS



WHAT ARE PFAS?

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a large group of manufactured organic chemicals that are used in a variety of products for their nonstick properties (e.g., Teflon, Scotchgard), as well as in industrial applications such as firefighting. Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) usage at military bases and airports are sources of PFAS in drinking water supplies near those locations.

PFOA has been phased out of production, but replacement compounds, such as “GenX,” have been developed and are increasingly being detected in the environment. There are thousands of PFAS compounds.

IS MY WATER SAFE TO DRINK?

Yes, [Company Name] water quality meets or surpasses all state and federal standards. [Company Name] is dedicated to providing water is up to or above health standards. PFAS is a nationwide issue and [Company Name] will continue to remain proactive in its mitigation efforts.

WILL BOILING MY WATER REMOVE PFAS?

There would not be any expected benefit to boiling water in order to remove PFAS, because it is a chemical compound.

WILL A FILTER HELP REDUCE EXPOSURE TO PFAS?

Some customers may make the personal choice to use water filters or drink bottled water. Certified water filtration systems can reduce levels of PFAS below the Environmental Protection Agency’s health advisory levels; however, the water provided by [Company Name] meets or exceed those levels.

HOW CAN I REDUCE MY FAMILY’S EXPOSURE?

Get your tap or well water tested: You can find out how and what to do next by visiting [URL for testing resources] or look for laboratories recommended by the [URL for Environmental Regulator] for testing services.

Detection does not necessarily equal risk. The EPA is developing information on health effects. Occurrence data collected under UCMR5 will help water systems be prepared when the health effects data are available. There is no need to take specific action, even if PFAS were detected, unless otherwise directed by your water system or health official. If a concern remains, contact your healthcare provider.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF PFAS EXPOSURE?

If your drinking water is contaminated above levels specified by the EPA or your state government, use an alternate water source for drinking, preparing food, cooking, brushing teeth, and any other activity when you might swallow water. If you do not know if your water is contaminated, ask your local health department.

Avoid eating contaminated fish. Check with your local or state health and environmental quality departments for fish advisories in your area and follow the advisories.

Even though recent efforts to remove PFAS have reduced the likelihood of exposure, some products may still contain them. If you have questions or concerns about products you use in your home, contact the Consumer Product Safety Commission at (800) 638-2772.

Health effects can also be found by visiting the CDC’s Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry [here](#).

WHAT IF HIGH PFAS LEVELS ARE FOUND?

If your tap water or private well tap water has high PFAS levels, choose an alternative water source. You should choose bottled water brands that are confirmed to have low PFAS concentrations and packaging without PFAS. See question below.

IS BOTTLED WATER SAFE? IS THE BOTTLE SAFE?

Reduce your risk of exposure to these chemicals by using bottled water or other licensed drinking water that has been tested for these chemicals or that uses a treatment that removes these chemicals (specifically activated carbon or reverse osmosis). Many major bottled water brands use this treatment.

HOW DO I MINIMIZE THE RISK AT HOME?

Leave shoes at the door to avoid tracking in dirt and pollutants. Wet mop or vacuum the floor instead of using a broom to avoid flying PFAS particles. Vacuum with a HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) filter.

Regular maintenance of home air filters has been shown to reduce levels of other persistent pollutants in dust in the home and is anticipated to provide similar reductions in PFAS. Find the right air filter for your home using the EPA’s [Guide to Air Cleaners in the Home](#).

The average person spends 65% of their entire life inside their home! Check out [Homes for Health](#) for more tips on keeping each area of your home healthier.

WHAT TYPES OF COMMON PRODUCTS SHOULD, OR SHOULDN’T I PURCHASE?

Research has suggested that exposure to PFOA and PFOS from today’s consumer products is usually low, especially when compared to exposures to contaminated drinking water.

- **Avoid non-stick cookware containing PFAS.** Buy stainless steel and cast-iron pots and pans. If you have old non-stick pans you cannot part with, do not heat them over 450°F or use them in the oven. When the coating shows signs of wear-and-tear, it is time to let them go.

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- **Avoid stain-resistant treatments** by asking for furniture, carpet and cleaning supplies that do not contain PFAS or are not marketed as “stain-resistant.”
- **Purchase PFAS-free products** from companies who have committed to eliminating PFAS from their manufacturing. A list from the CDC’s Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry can be found [here](#).
- **Be aware that water and stain resistant treatments for textiles used as clothing or carpets are often made using PFAS.** Many companies are seeking to eliminate PFAS from their stain and water-resistant products; however, until these transitions are complete it is important to be aware that these products may contain PFAS, particularly if they are older products:

PTFE (e.g., Teflon® coating, Gore-Tex® materials)

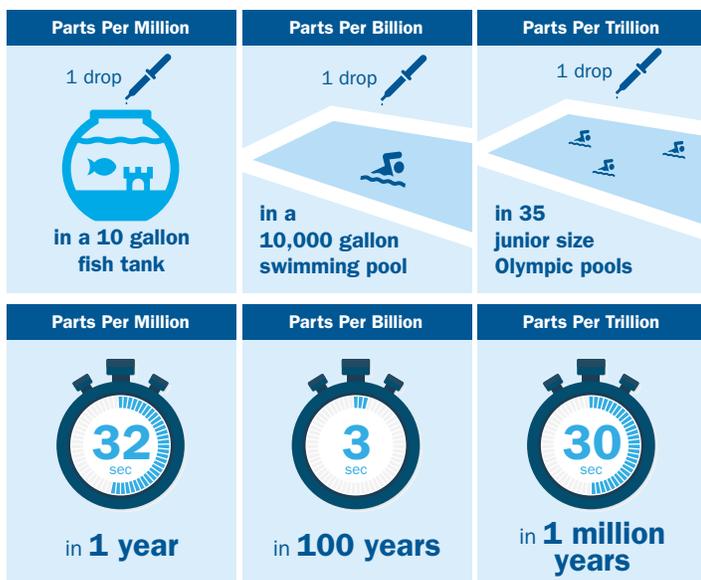
PFOS or PFBS (e.g., Scotchgard® coating), older items contain PFOS (e.g., Polartec® materials)

WHAT REGULATIONS ARE CURRENTLY IN PLACE FOR PFAS IN DRINKING WATER?

PFAS have been linked to various toxicological issues and are highly persistent in the environment. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set a non-enforceable Health Advisory Level of 70 nanograms per liter or parts per trillion (ppt) for combined PFOA and PFOS. Several States have established requirements for different PFAS ranging from MCLs to notification and response levels to guidance levels. The EPA released a PFAS Action Plan in February 2019 and made a preliminary decision to establish drinking water standards for PFOA and PFOS in March 2020.

WHAT DOES PARTS PER TRILLION (PPT) MEAN?

Most contaminants are measured using concentration units such as ppm, ppb, and ppt. To realize how small a value this is and how difficult this contaminate is to trace in the environment, see the analogies listed below:



CAN PFAS BE FOUND IN COSMETICS?

Generally, be cautious when ingredients contain the words “fluoro” or “perfluoro.” PFAS are found in certain types of dental floss, nail polish, facial moisturizers, eye make-up and more.

Here are ingredients to look out for:

- PTFE
- Perfluorononyl Dimethicone
- Perfluorodecalin
- C9-15 Fluoroalcohol Phosphate
- Octafluoropentyl Methacrylate
- Perfluorohexane
- Pentafluoropropane
- Polyperfluoroethoxymethoxy Difluoroethyl Peg Phosphate
- Polyperfluoroethoxymethoxy Peg-2 Phosphate
- Methyl Perfluorobutyl Ether
- Perfluorononyl ethyl Carboxydecyl Peg-10 Dimethicone
- Perfluorodimethylcyclohexane
- Perfluoroperhydrophenanthrene

WHERE CAN I GO TO FIND RESOURCES ABOUT PFAS IN MY STATE?

The United States Environmental Protection Agency has listed U.S State Resources about PFAS on their website. Click [here](#) for more information. General information on PFOA, PFOS, and PFBS is available at www.epa.gov/pfas.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO MITIGATE PFAS IN MY DRINKING WATER?

[Company Name] has and continues to conduct extensive screening/monitoring to identify potential impacted sites and then implement solutions in those systems that exceed the health advisory levels.

[Company Name] consistently meets or surpasses all U.S. EPA and [State DEP] regulations. As new federal water quality regulations are set by U.S. EPA, we will make necessary improvements or treatment adjustments to comply with those standards. When U.S. EPA and/or the [State DEP] lower the health advisory limit for combined PFAS, [Company Name] will comply and meet the new requirement.

WHY WASN'T [COMPANY NAME] LOOKING FOR PFAS EARLIER?

This is one of the most rapidly changing landscapes in drinking water contamination. [Company Name] has invested time and effort on research, as well as engaging with other experts in the field to understand PFAS occurrence, fate, and transport in the environment. We are also actively assessing treatment technologies that can effectively remove PFAS from drinking water, because we believe that investment in research is critical for addressing this issue.

Sources

- Dartmouth (2021). PFAS in New Hampshire, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and Responses. https://geiselmed.dartmouth.edu/epidemiology/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2021/05/FAQ-PFAS_NH_5-3-21_Post.pdf
- American Water (2020). PFAS. <https://www.amwater.com/corp/resources/american-water-PFAS.pdf>
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- EPA - PFOA, PFOS and Other PFAS (2022). U.S. State Resources about PFAS. <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/us-state-resources-about-pfas>