

PFAS FACT SHEET

1 WHAT ARE PFAS?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of thousands of man-made chemicals that have been used extensively in numerous consumer products.



Although certain PFAS chemicals (including PFOA and PFOS) are no longer manufactured in the United States, these chemicals are still produced internationally and imported into the U.S. in consumer goods.

3 PFAS ARE EVERYWHERE

PFAS are found in common household and commercial products, such as clothes, carpets, pans and fast food packaging. While chemical manufacturers are the original source of PFAS, there are areas across the nation where the chemicals have seeped into groundwater, rivers, lakes and other drinking water supplies.



2 LOCAL WATER AGENCIES ARE RESPONDING TO PFAS

Local water agencies that have detected PFAS in their water supply have been researching the sources and determining the most cost-effective response. These agencies have taken steps such as removing groundwater wells from service and building state-of-the-art testing and treatment facilities to ensure the drinking water delivered to Californians is safe. These actions are costly and agencies are trying to protect rate-paying customers by advocating that the costs are borne by the companies that developed and manufactured PFAS, and supplemented by state and federal funding.



4 CALIFORNIA IS RESPONDING TO PFAS

The California Office of Environmental Health and Hazard Assessment on April 5, 2024 adopted public health goals of 0.007 ppt for PFOA and 1.0 ppt for PFOS. The public health goals are objectives, but not enforceable standards. The State Water Resources Control Board is working on a statewide standard.

**Parts per trillion (ppt)
One ppt is equal to one drop of water in 20 Olympic-sized pools.*



5 THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS RESPONDING TO PFAS

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on April 10, 2024 announced a new national maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 4.0 parts per trillion (ppt) for PFOA and PFOS. This requires public water suppliers to monitor for these PFAS, notify the public of the levels of these PFAS in the water and reduce the levels of these PFAS in drinking water if they exceed the MCL. Utilities will have five years to come into compliance with the rule. Some agencies may need more time to install or upgrade necessary infrastructure due to permitting, supply chain, and technological challenges.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

State Water Board: www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/PFOA_PFOS

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: www.epa.gov/pfas