

PFAS

TOP 10 FACTS



1. PFAS refer to per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances, a class of manmade chemicals used in firefighting, stain resistance, water repellants, and other industrial applications since the 1940s.
2. PFAS contamination can be found in landfills receiving waste since the 1950s and in the land and groundwater surrounding facilities using aqueous film forming foams (AFFF), like airports, defense facilities, or fire-fighting training center, or other legacy industrial sites.
3. The CDC estimates 98 percent of the U.S. population has been exposed to PFAS and have measurable concentrations in their blood.
4. Human exposure can occur through ingestion, direct contact, inhalation, and occupational contact.
5. Certain PFAS have been associated with a variety of negative health effects.
6. As of July 2022, federal maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for PFAS in drinking water have not been set by EPA. The agency recently updated lifetime health advisory levels (HALs) for four PFAS: PFOA, PFOS, GenX chemicals, and PFBS. The health advisory levels for PFOA and PFOS, which are in the parts per quadrillion level, are below levels detectable by modern laboratory methods.
7. Unlike MCLs, health advisories are non-enforceable and non-regulatory. In the absence of federal MCLs, many states have adopted their own groundwater and drinking water criteria for PFAS, with a range of limits and a mix of compounds being regulated.
8. EPA plans to propose PFOA and PFOS MCLs by fall 2022 and finalize by fall 2023.
9. NGWA encourages routine water testing for a range of contaminants in wells and well systems. If PFAS is detected in your area, testing for those contaminants should also be considered.
10. EPA published a Strategic PFAS Roadmap in October 2021 to address PFAS across all program offices, leveraging the full range of statutory authorities granted to them. Implementation of the plan is ongoing. Progress against the plan can be found on EPA's PFAS Strategic Roadmap webpage.
<https://www.epa.gov/pfas/pfas-strategic-roadmap-epas-commitments-action-2021-2024>

NGWA and its members developed a comprehensive guidance document titled "Groundwater and PFAS: State of Knowledge and Practice" in late 2017. A 12-month effort by 36 volunteers spending 1100 hours, this eight-part reference document contains information on human impacts, risk communication, remediation, and treatment of PFAS, among other topics. For more information, please visit www.ngwa.org/pfas