



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS PFAS Factsheet

Reason for Notification Letters

As part of the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (Section 335), Department of Defense (DoD) installations with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) detected in the groundwater above the notification levels must notify all agricultural operations within one-mile down gradient of the military installation of potential contamination.

What are PFAS

- Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of nearly 5,000 human-made chemicals used worldwide since the 1950s.
- They are found in a broad range of products ranging from food packaging, non-stick cookware, water-proofing sealants, and fire-fighting foams.
- PFAS are engineered to be extremely stable under diverse conditions and do not easily breakdown in most environments.
- Due to the persistence and chemical properties, PFAS are the subject of ongoing research and increasing regulations worldwide.
- One primary mode of exposure for humans and animals is through the consumption of PFAS-contaminated water supplies.

Potential concerns with PFAS around DoD facilities

- DoD has provided details on the local contamination issue and whom to contact for further information.
- Receiving a notice from DoD does not mean that a landowner will experience PFAS contamination of their water supply or on their property.
- Many factors influence whether or not a particular location will ultimately be impacted by potential contamination including, the type of PFAS and amount introduced into the environment, climate, hydrology, and geology.

Potential actions agricultural producers can take

Landowners or producers who have received a notice from DoD and are concerned about PFAS contamination on their property or in their water supply may consider the following actions:

- Contact the entity named on the notice from DoD.
- Contact the respective state's department of health or equivalent office.
- Test the water supply for the presence of PFAS using a State-approved laboratory certified in PFAS testing and following State-certified testing protocols. (Contact your state's department of health or equivalent office for recommended and approved testing laboratories.)

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If PFAS is detected in my water supply

- A determination will need to be made as to whether the detection is from background levels or from contamination.
- If detection levels are above the regulatory limits (varies from state to state), the following actions can be taken:
 - Contact the entity named on the DoD notice and report the PFAS detection level.
 - Contact the state department of health or equivalent office and report the PFAS detection level.
 - Consider finding an alternative water supply for consumption (i.e. bottled water).
 - Common practical removal methods for PFAS from drinking water include: activated carbon filtration or ion exchange.

Additional Resource on PFAS can be found at the following locations:

DoD webpage with information on PFAS

<https://www.defense.gov/Explore/Spotlight/pfas/>

EPA webpage providing general information on PFAS

<https://www.epa.gov/pfas/>

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) webpage on PFAS

<https://www.fda.gov/food/chemical-contaminants-food/and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas/>

NRCS Science and Technology Webinar Portal

PFAS – What is in your water?

<http://conservationwebinars.net/webinars/pfas-what-is-in-your-water/?searchterm=PFAS>

PFAS in Agricultural Operations

<http://conservationwebinars.net/webinars/pfas-in-agricultural-operations/?searchterm=PFAS>

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