



**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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