



Fact Sheet PFAS in Florida

PFAS are man-made chemicals used in the manufacture of consumer goods, including cookware, flame-retardants, waterproofing, furniture and take out containers. There are 5,000 variations of PFAS in use—PFOA and PFAS are the most common even though they are no longer manufactured in the US. These chemicals do not break down in the environment and they bioaccumulate in the food chain. They are associated with birth defects and developmental damage to the liver, kidneys, and immune system, as well as cancer risk.

What kind of PFAS are in Florida?

The Environmental Working Group, an environmental education and research group, estimates that at least 2,500 industrial facilities across the U.S. could be discharging PFAS into the air, water, and soil. Florida has recorded high levels of PFHpA, PFHxS, PFOA and PFOS. These compounds are scattered across the state and are found to varying degrees in wastewater discharges, firefighting foam, and military installations. To date, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection has concentrated its efforts to identify PFAS sites on military installations, of which there are [28 known sites](#) across the state. There are at least [23 other sites](#) that are currently targeted for state-funded sampling sites, also across the state. Sadly, Florida does not regulate PFAS, other than to set a [health advisory level](#) of 70 parts per trillion as an informational level used to inform the public.

Is PFAS in drinking water in Florida?

According to the Environmental Working Group, these toxic compounds have been found in the drinking water in [Miami-Dade County](#), the [City of Miami Beach](#), the [City of North Miami](#), the [City of Lauderdale](#), the [City of Stuart](#), the [City of Zephyrhills](#), the [City of Ocala](#), Pensacola's [Emerald Coast Utilities Authority](#), the [City of Defuniak Springs](#) and the [J. Robert Dean Water Treatment Facility](#) (owned and operated by the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority).

Firefighting Foam Found Contaminated with PFAS in Florida

An [article](#) published by the Department of Defense entitled *Addressing Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA)*, several military installations use firefighting foam that has been contaminated with PFAS and PFOA. The Environmental Working Group reported that several of the military and associated installations were found in Florida. Those installations were Brevard County's Patrick Air Force Base, Satellite Beach, Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, the Florida State Fire College in Ocala, Eglin Air Force Base in Okaloosa County, the Naval

Air Station in Pensacola, the Naval Air Station (Whiting Field) in Milton, the Kennedy Space Center, and the Naval Air Station (Saufley Field) in Pensacola.

Are there any federal restrictions on PFAS?

No. There is a non-binding health advisory limit for PFOA and PFAS in drinking water. On February 14, 2019, EPA issued a PFAS Action Plan promising Congress and citizens that it will regulate PFOA and PFAS in drinking water within a year. However, on March 10, 2020, EPA issued a notice to consider developing regulations, with a timeline pushing out regulation another five years. This year, the National Defense Authorization Act required that facilities report if they manufacture or use any of 172 PFAS chemicals. Reporting is not enough.

What about state protections?

Some states recognize that the federal government is failing to protect citizens. About 10 of those states have set their own drinking water standards. Some states, like Michigan and Massachusetts, are going to the sources to prevent them from contaminating the air and water. Some states like Minnesota are recovering millions of dollars from polluters so that they can clean up their state. See www.saferstates.com

How is Florida doing?

Florida has been slow to act. There is no clear timeline for setting drinking water standards in Florida. The policy standards that the state is currently proposing are less protective of public health than those used by progressive states.

What can I do?

The Florida Department of Health and the Florida [Department of Environmental Protection](#) are the lead agencies tasked with addressing the statewide PFAS problem. The Florida Department of Health is particularly involved in issues concerning [drinking water](#). To date, however, there is no clear urgency being seen at the state level to aggressively address PFAS contamination in Florida. Please urge the state to rely on the research and work done in other states to develop a program now. You can call Florida's Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Waste Management at (850) 245-8705 to urge the agency to move forward on adopting rules regulating PFAS contamination in Florida. Likewise, the Hazardous Waste Site Health Risk Assessment Program at Florida's Department of Health can be contacted at (877) 798-2772.

Do you have more questions? Contact us and we will help you find the answers.