PFAS | PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES

THE CHEMICALS

PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are a group of synthetic chemicals manufactured and used worldwide since the 1940s. PFAS are known for their **chemical stability, heat resistance, and oil- and water-repellence**, which result from their unique chemical composition. These qualities make PFAS useful **in thousands of industrial processes and consumer products**, including:

- Nonstick cookware
- Food packaging materials
- Detergents and fabric softeners
- Stain-resistant carpets
- Water-resistant apparel
- Personal care products
- Floor, car, and boat waxes
- Firefighting foams used to extinguish flammable liquid fires

THE PROBLEM

After decades of widespread use, we now know PFAS to be **pervasive and persistent contaminants that have serious adverse impacts on human health, even at low levels.**

Because they are highly mobile and are not broken down by natural processes, PFAS are found throughout the environment as well as in drinking water, foods, consumer products, indoor dust, and the human bloodstream. Research on their potential human health and ecological impacts is rapidly evolving, but PFAS have been strongly linked to a **wide variety of health risks**, including:

- Developmental effects in fetuses and infants
- Kidney and testicular cancer
- Liver, thyroid, cholesterol, immune system, and reproductive effects

STATE LEADERSHIP

Given the current **absence of federal regulations governing the use and disposal of PFAS**, a number of individual states have begun initiatives to educate their residents about the risks associated with PFAS and to implement appropriate safeguards.

NEXT STEPS

The Office of the Governor is organizing an **Interagency PFAS Task Force**, co-chaired by the Departments of Public Health (DPH) and Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), to protect human health and the environment from the harmful effects of PFAS, a goal that closely aligns with the missions of both agencies.

This workgroup will collaborate to provide a **State Action Plan for PFAS**, which we anticipate will include an assessment of:

- **Potential sources of PFAS contamination**
- **Potential impacts on drinking water resources**
- **PFAS concentrations in our local environment**
- **Alternatives to PFAS-containing products**

In addition to DPH and DEEP, the agencies in this Task Force will include, but are not limited to the:

- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Administrative Services
- Public Utilities Regulatory Authority
- Department of Consumer Protection
- Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection

RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

DPH Drinking Water Section PFAS webpage	https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Drinking-Water/DWS/Per--and-Polyfluoroalkyl-Substances
DEEP Emerging Contaminants webpage	https://www.ct.gov/deep/emergingcontaminants
EPA PFAS webpage	https://www.epa.gov/pfas
EPA PFAS Action Plan	https://www.epa.gov/pfas/epas-pfas-action-plan
Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council (ITRC) PFAS Fact Sheets	https://pfas-1.itrcweb.org/