



US EPA's Federal Safety Regulations on PFAS in Drinking Water

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) set new drinking water safety regulations for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Sometimes, PFAS are called “forever chemicals.” The new regulations include 6 new maximum contaminant levels (MCLs).

- MCLs limit how much of a chemical can be in drinking water. They are enforceable.
- Starting in April 2029, federally regulated public water systems that serve at least 25 of the same people for more than 180 days per year must ensure PFAS levels are lower than the MCLs for the 6 types of PFAS chemicals EPA included in the list. This is calculated by using the average PFAS levels for the entire year. Water systems must keep the yearly average of each PFAS below the MCL.
- Public water systems in Washington test for PFAS at least one time every 3 years. They have to test more often if they find any PFAS.
- For more information on the MCLs, visit [Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances \(PFAS\) | US EPA](#) (hyperlink).



PFAS chemicals can get into our drinking water when they escape from consumer products, or fire-fighting foams like aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF).



Drinking PFAS-contaminated water could harm our health.

PFAS build up in our body when we're exposed. Having higher levels of PFAS chemicals in our bodies could increase our risk for health conditions like lower birthweights, high cholesterol, and kidney cancer. For more information, visit [PFAS | Washington State Department of Health](#) (hyperlink).



EPA's new federal regulations protect our health from PFAS exposure.

See Page 2 for EPA's MCLs.

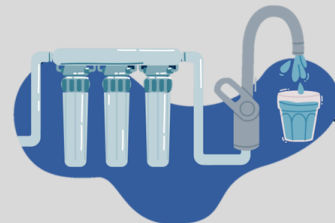
2024 EPA MCLs for PFAS

PFAS Chemical	MCL (in parts per trillion)
PFOA	4.0 ppt
PFOS	4.0 ppt
PFNA	10 ppt
PFHxS	10 ppt
HFPO-DA ("GenX" chemicals, which have not been found yet in our state)	10 ppt
Mixture of 2 or more: PFNA, PFHxS, HFPO-DA, and PFBS	Hazard Index of 1*

*The "Hazard Index" is an EPA approach to calculating health risks when we're exposed to multiple chemicals at the same time. Each chemical amount is compared to its safety level and added with other PFAS chemicals compared to their safety level, to make sure the total levels are low enough to protect health.

For Private Well Owners:

- If you are building or selling your home, check with your county health department about any regulations they have PFAS in drinking water from private wells.
- If you have PFAS levels in your water higher than at least one of the MCLs, consider using a [water filter certified to lower PFAS levels](#).



How does this impact public water systems?

- Public water systems cannot have PFAS higher than the MCLs on average each year. This means that by 2029, no federally regulated public water systems that regularly serve the same people can have average PFAS levels higher than the MCLs.
- If these water systems find any amount of PFAS chemicals in their water, they must tell customers in their annual consumer confidence report.
- Water systems that find PFAS levels higher than at least one of our SALs (see table below) are required to tell their customers within 30 days of a confirmed detection. Beginning in late April 2029, EPA requires public notification when average PFAS levels are above an MCL. Our office works with water systems with PFAS higher than a SAL or MCL to help them find ways to make the water safe to drink long-term.
- To find out if your water system has tested for PFAS chemicals, call the number on your water bill or visit our PFAS water system testing dashboard at [Drinking Water PFAS Testing Results Data | Washington State Department of Health](#) (hyperlink). You can also search for your water system's contact information on the internet.

PFAS Chemical	Washington State Action Level
PFOA	10 ppt
PFOS	15 ppt
PFNA	9 ppt
PFHxS	65 ppt
PFBS	345 ppt

If PFAS levels are higher than at least one of the SALs, water systems have to tell customers within 30 days of a confirmed detection.

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To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 (Washington Relay) or email doh.information@doh.wa.gov.

Office of Drinking Water

Washington State Department of Health

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