

# **PFAS CHEMICALS BACKGROUND & OUTLOOK**

**Lynn Thorp  
National Campaigns Director  
Clean Water Action & Clean Water Fund  
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## **PFAS CHEMICALS - WHY ARE WE HERE?**

- Brief History - “Legacy Chemicals – PFOA and PFAS
- “Replacement” Chemicals – over 4,700 – proliferation of uses. Sources: Many – chrome plating, refineries, foam uses, textiles, manufacturing of numerous consumer products
- Contaminated sites - fire-fighting foam training, use, spills
- Occurrence in water – UCMR 3 & more recent sampling in drinking water; comprehensive water sampling in states – CO, MI
- Health research – wide array, low levels, persistent
- Emerging concerns – food, air, wildlife, “essential” uses

## Outlook for Regulation & Other Solutions

- EPA PFAS Action Plan - February 2018. updated 2019 & 2020 – wide array of EPA research and potential regulatory activity across offices and statutes – Safe Drinking Water Act, Clean Water Act, Toxic Substances Control Act, health effects, lab methods
- State Activity – Bills proposed in at least 25 states – fire-fighting foam, food packaging, water. Maryland examples – uses & products. Regulatory and/or research activity in health and environmental agencies nationwide.
- Federal & State Drinking Water Regulation – EPA Health Advisory Levels PFOA + PFOS 70 ppt. NJ MCLs – PFOA 14ppt; PFOS 13 ppt; PFNA 13 ppt. EPA recent actions PFOA & PFOS, new sampling
- Upstream thinking – Clean Water Act
- Non-Regulatory Approaches – McDonald’s phase-out

## RESOURCES

[EPA PFAS Action Plan web page](https://www.epa.gov/pfas/epas-pfas-action-plan) (<https://www.epa.gov/pfas/epas-pfas-action-plan>)

GAO Report: [\*Man Made Chemicals and Potential Health Risks: EPA Has Completed Some Regulatory Actions for PFAS\*](#), U.S. Government Accountability Office, January 2021 (<https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-21-37.pdf>)

[PFAS Central.org](https://pfascentral.org/) – great hub for scientific and product information. Collaboration between Green Science Policy Institute and Northeastern University (<https://pfascentral.org/>)

[\*When it Comes to Tackling Toxic Forever Chemicals, the Clean Water Act Has Many Powerful Yet Underutilized Tools\*](#), Jennifer Peters blog/white paper, Clean Water Action, February 17, 2021 (<https://www.cleanwateraction.org/2021/02/17/when-it-comes-tackling-toxic-%E2%80%98forever-chemicals%E2%80%99-clean-water-act-has-many-powerful-yet>)

[NIH National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences \(NIEHS\)](https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/programs/pfas/index.cfm) – large body of research on PFAS human exposure and health effects (<https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/programs/pfas/index.cfm>)