



WA STATE STANDARDS FOR PFAS IN DRINKING WATER

Association of Washington Cities

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Speakers



Mike Means R.G., LHG

*Capacity Development
and Policy Manager*

Office of Drinking Water

Mike.Means@doh.wa.gov



Chris Pettit

DWSRF Program Manager

Office of Drinking Water

Chris.Pettit@doh.wa.gov

Overview

- What are PFAS?
- State Action Levels (SAL)
- SAL Rule Implementation
- EPA Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) and SAL Comparison
- Emerging Contaminants Funding Availability

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Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Nonstick, Stain and Water Resistant, Heat Stable



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Some PFAS are PBTs

Persistent
in the
environment

Bioaccumulate
in humans

Toxic
at low levels

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Health Concerns



In Humans

- Increased serum cholesterol
- Altered liver enzymes
- Reduced immune response to vaccines
- Lower birth weight
- Blood pressure problems during pregnancy
- Increase risk of thyroid disease
- Increased risk of cancer (kidney and testicular)



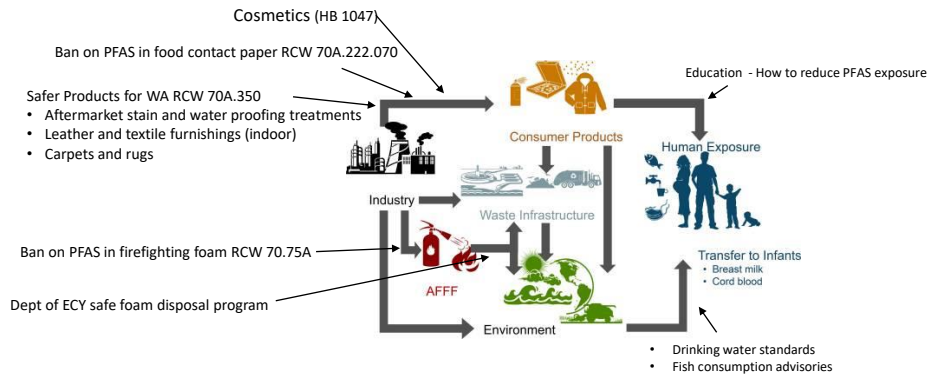
In Laboratory Animals

- Liver toxicity
- Developmental toxicity
- Reproductive toxicity
- Immune toxicity
- Endocrine disruption
- Tumors in liver, pancreas, testes

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WA State Action to Address PFAS



Source: Sunderland EM et al. (2019) A review of the pathways of human exposure to poly- and perfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs) and present understanding of health effects. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6380916/>

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SALs set to be Health Protective

- A level in water expected to be without appreciable health effects over a lifetime of exposure, including in sensitive groups.
- Based on best available science at the time.



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State Action Level (SAL) vs. Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)



SAL

Set as close to Public Health Goal as possible...

Considering:

- Technical feasibility



MCL

Set as close to Public Health Goal as possible...

Considering:

- Technical feasibility
- Cost-benefit

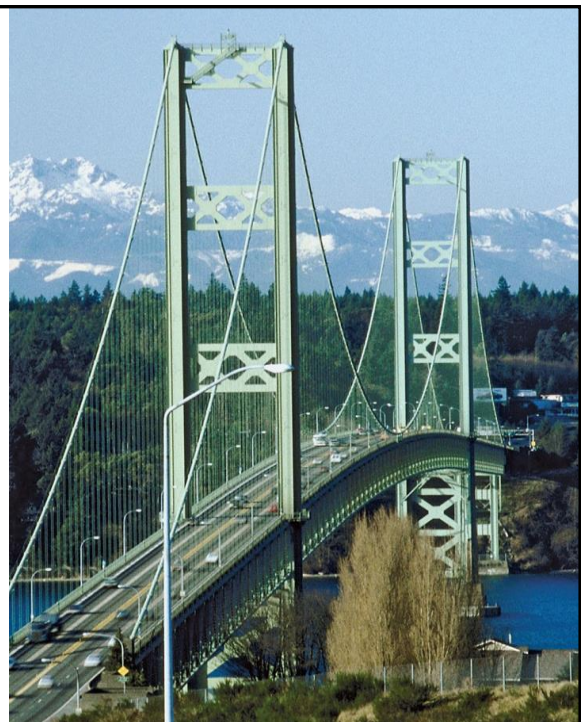
Limit is Enforced

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A SAL is a Bridge to an MCL

- SALs **require** testing, public notification and **guide** public health response to results.
- Testing helps define scope of problem and necessary funding and resources.
- Testing data is needed to develop state cost-benefit analyses for Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCL).



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2021 State Action Levels (SALs)

Features:

- Sets action levels for 5 PFAS.
- Requires PFAS testing by most Group A water systems.
- Requires notification of customers.
- Requires follow-up monitoring.
- Effective date: Jan 1, 2022.
- Mitigation of water is not required but systems are encouraged to follow public health advice and funding support is available.



Drinking water Contaminant	SAL (parts per trillion)
PFOA	10
PFOS	15
PFNA	9
PFHxS	65
PFBS	345

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Implementation of the PFAS SALs

- Initial PFAS test required between Jan 2023- Dec 2025. (EPA methods 533 or 537.1)
- SALs apply to Group A public Water Systems
 - 2,209 Community systems
 - 318 Nontransient, Noncommunity systems
 - ?/1,577 Transient Noncommunity (only asked to test if near a detection)
- Voluntary free testing program – 2022/23 reopening 2024/25
- [Department of Health, Office of Drinking Water PFAS Free Sampling Enrollment Form](#)

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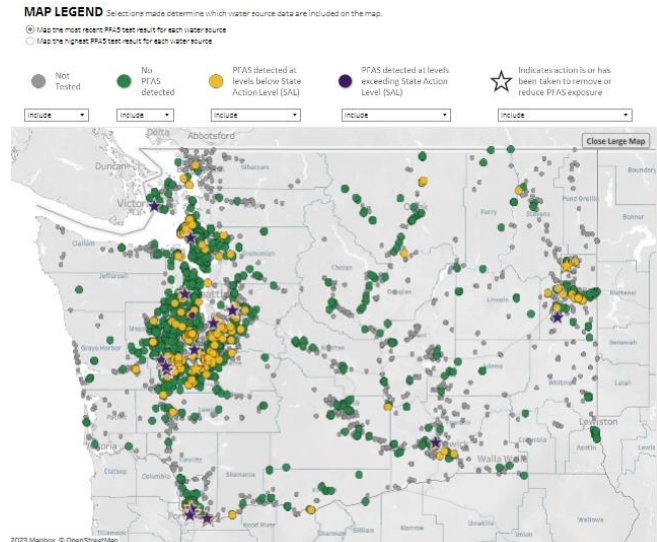
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Map of PFAS Drinking Water Testing

Only includes samples for Group A water systems complying with new state rule.

- Doesn't include historical water testing results yet.
- Doesn't include military testing yet.
- Doesn't include private well results.

<https://doh.wa.gov/data-and-statistical-reports/washington-tracking-network-wtn/pfas>



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EPA MCLs and SAL Comparisons

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EPA's New Science

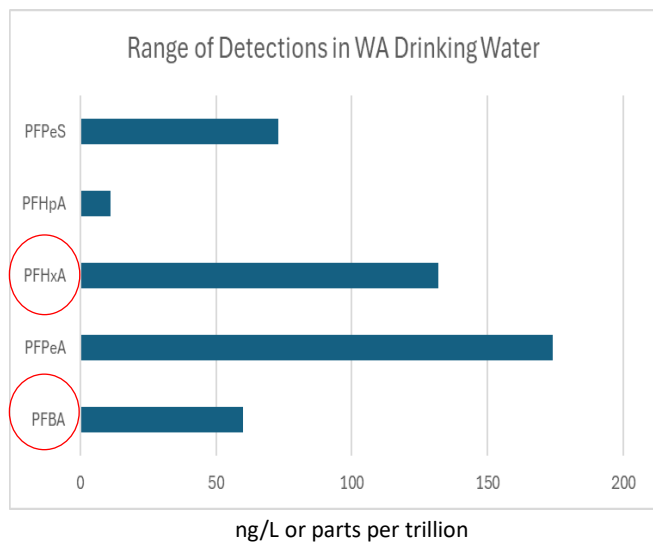
- PFOA, PFOS = Likely human carcinogens.
- PFNA, PFHxS – based on ATSDR toxicity values
- GenX and PFBS – based on EPA toxicity values
- Group MCL- PFHxS, PFNA, PFBS, GenX
 - Assume effects are additive
- EPA has toxicity values for PFBA and PFHxA, did not include.

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Other PFAS

- Five other PFAS frequently detected
- No SAL to guide action
- Develop state health recommendation?
- Adopt SAL?
- State MCL?



Note: Range shown doesn't include one water system with multiple PFAS at very high levels in San Juan County (outlier).

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Evolving Health Guidelines for Drinking Water (ng/L or ppt)

EPA Health Advisories 2016

PFOA	70
PFOS	70

WA SALs 2021

PFOA	10
PFOS	15
PFNA	9
PFHxS	65
PFBS	345

Non-cancer endpoints sufficiently protective of cancer endpoint

EPA Health Advisories 2022

PFOA	0.004
PFOS	0.02
PFBS	2000
GenX	10

2024: EPA withdrew its interim HALs for PFOA and PFOS

EPA Final MCLs 2024

PFOA	4
PFOS	4
PFHxS	10
PFNA	10
GenX	10

Grouped MCL for PFBS, GenX, PFNA & PFHxS

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Impact of Federal MCLs

- Federal MCLs supersede SALs when MCL rule is adopted.
- WAC 246-290-315(8) states:
“Upon federal adoption of an MCL, the federal MCL will supersede a SAL or a less stringent state MCL, and the associated requirements, including for monitoring and public notice. If the federally adopted MCL is less stringent than a SAL or state MCL, the board may take one of the following actions:
(a) Adopt the federal MCL; or
(b) Adopt a state MCL, at least as stringent as the federal MCL, using the process in subsections (6) and (7) of this section.”

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State vs. EPA MCLs for PFAS in Drinking Water (ng/L or parts per trillion)

Individual PFAS	WA State Action Levels (2021)	EPA MCL (2024)
PFOA	10	4
PFOS	15	4
PFNA	9	10
PFHxS	65	10
GenX	-	10

Group MCL (Hazard Index*)		HBWC used in hazard index*
PFNA	9	10
PFHxS	65	10
PFBS	345	2,000
GenX	-	10

*Health-based water concentration (HBWC) are the "acceptable" values used to create a ratio of observed/acceptable for each of 4 PFAS. If the ratios add up to more than 1.0, the hazard index MCL is exceeded, and action must be taken to lower PFAS.

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Comparing SAL/MCL Requirements

Action	SAL	MCL
Sampling		
Initial	1 sample unless detection then verification and quarterly	2 samples small groundwater – 4 large or surface water
Baseline	Quarterly for detections until reliably and consistently below MCL. Every 3 years for non-detect.	Quarterly starting June 2027 for detection, 3 years for ND starting June 2027
Public Notification		
Annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR)	Any detection requires CCR notification currently	Any detection for initial or baseline starts June 2027
Tier 2 (30 day) notification	Required for any SAL exceedance	Required for MCL exceedance after June 2029
Treatment	Recommended, not required	Required for MCL exceedance after June 2029

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Funding Opportunities For Emerging Contaminants

[Drinking Water State Revolving Fund \(DWSRF\) | Washington State Department of Health](#)

- Capitalization Grant and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Supplemental Funding
 - 1) Planning and Design
 - 2) Construction
- WIIN Grant for Small and Disadvantaged Communities
 - 1) Sampling
 - 2) Planning and Design
 - 3) Short Term Mitigation
 - 4) Long Term Remediation
- **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE**

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Litigation and Settlement Activities

- Litigation for water contamination and other injuries caused by PFAS through AFFF has been consolidated in a multi-district litigation (MDL) in the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina, presided over by Judge Richard M. Gergel (Case No. MDL 2873).
- Over **3,000 cases** consolidated in the MDL
- More than **40 Defendants**

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Litigation and Settlement

- On June 22, 2023, Defendant 3M settled for approximately **\$12.5 billion** with all “Public Water Systems.”
- All “Public Water Systems” (approximately 6,000 identified in the settlement documents) will automatically be bound by the settlement unless they “opt-out” of within 60 days after receiving the Class Notice.
- Settling will likely receive only **“pennies on the dollar”**

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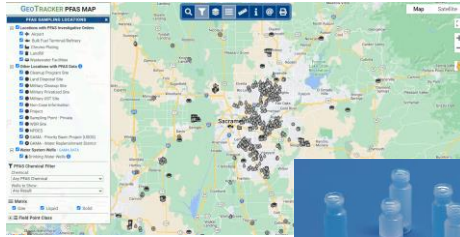
Examples of Equivalent Settlements

- Currently, there are more than **15,000 claims** that have been filed nationwide against DuPont—and its spinoffs Chemours and Corteva—along with 3M, the major manufacturers of PFAS in the U.S.
- 3M settled with the state of Minnesota for **\$850 million** over the company's production of PFAS, or per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances, that had damaged the drinking water in the Twin Cities metro.

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Recommendations for Cities

- Perform “Desktop Study”
- Non-invasive sampling



- Understand your full scope of damages
- **Look out for your City Council – be proactive with your narrative**



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Questions?

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