

DRINKING WATER & PFAS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, OHIO

Question #1: What was the purpose of the March 18, 2025, email notification to the base population regarding the PFAS drinking water standards?

Answer: The purpose was to notify base personnel of the new PFAS drinking water standards and explain its application and impact to the base's drinking water and its consumers. The USEPA has provided a five-year time frame for public drinking water providers, like WPAFB, to meet the new standards. Currently, the base is in compliance with the regulatory potable drinking water standards. WPAFB is required to meet the new standards by April 2029, and is required to make public notification of PFAS results in 2027. The purpose of the base notification was also to share the PFAS sampling results now, versus waiting until 2027. The Air Force takes this issue very seriously and is committed to addressing PFAS in a deliberative, holistic and transparent manner, in addition to ensuring compliance with the new USEPA regulations. The Department of Defense and Air Force recognize this importance and are dedicated to the proactive investigation, monitoring and mitigation of PFAS at WPAFB.

Question #2: Is the base water safe to drink for all consumers, including children?

Answer: Under the new PFAS drinking water regulations, all public water systems must comply with the new standards by April 2029, and there is no regulatory requirement to provide alternate sources of water before that date. Currently, the base is compliant with potable drinking water regulatory standards and will not be providing alternative sources of water. As far as the potential health effects or safety of the water, the USEPA based the new standards on the length of time and the concentration of PFAS a person may consume in drinking water over their lifetime. They also considered risk factors for children, those pregnant and breastfeeding. The science and research of PFAS on human health effects is continually evolving and there is extensive research being conducted to determine where PFAS exist and what impact they may have on human health and the environment. Additional information regarding PFAS exposure can be found on the USEPA website (<https://www.epa.gov/pfas>) and on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry website (<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/>). Drinking water is just one potential source of PFAS exposure. The EPA offers guidance on ways to reduce overall PFAS exposure, which you can find at <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/meaningful-and-achievable-steps-you-can-take-reduce-your-risk>.

Question #3: Are off-the-shelf reverse osmosis water treatment stations and drinking water fountains with filters compliant with EPA PFAS standards?

Answer: Compliance with the PFAS standards is demonstrated by sampling the drinking water at the point the water enters the distribution system at the base's drinking water plants, not at off-the-shelf treatment stations or drinking water fountains. According to USEPA, granular activated carbon, anion exchange, reverse osmosis, and nanofiltration are the "Best Available Technologies" for meeting the PFAS standards (https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-04/pfas-npdwr_fact-sheet_treatment_4.8.24.pdf). Regarding off-the-shelf treatment systems, the manufacturer would need to be contacted to determine its effectiveness.

Question #4: Has WPAFB done any testing for PFAS accumulation in base wildlife?

Answer: WPAFB has sampled surface waters, including storm water, creeks, the Mad River and Bass Lake for PFAS. Elevated levels of PFAS have been detected in these waters. In 2022, fish from Bass Lake were collected and sampled for PFAS compounds. Concentrations of PFAS were detected in the fish tissues. In July 2022, out of an abundance of caution and as a proactive measure to protect the health and safety of anglers, WPAFB implemented a catch and release advisory for all the lakes on the base. The catch and release fish advisory was solely based upon caution and will remain in place until further

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notice. No other wildlife on the base has been sampled for PFAS and WPAFB does not have any plans to sample wildlife in the future. Currently, there are no federal, state of Ohio, other Ohio wildlife consumption advisories, or surface water health advisories relating to PFAS. The new USEPA PFAS standards only pertain to drinking water. Fish consumption advisories for Ohio can be found at <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/Ohio-Sport-Fish-Consumption-Advisory/Publications/oh-fish-advisory>. Recommended sources for additional information on PFAS in wildlife are the Ohio Department of Health, 614-466-3543, and Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife, 1-800-945-3543.

Question #5: What does “ND” mean in the PFAS sample results? Are the Area A Water Treatment Plants 10855 and 30172 sampled for PFAS prior to mixing in the distribution system?

Answer: ND means non-detectable for PFAS, meaning the analytical laboratory that evaluated the water samples could not detect PFAS above the laboratory equipment’s detection level. The PFAS detection level for the laboratory is less than the new standards, therefore any ND results would be compliant with the PFAS standards. The drinking water from the two Area A Water Treatment Plants is sampled at each plant. Therefore, it is sampled prior to mixing in the distribution system.

Question #6: When is funding expected to equip the two remaining Water Treatment Plants in Areas A and B with PFAS treatment systems?

Answer: Funding has been requested for fiscal years (FY) 2025 and 2026. If funds are received by FY2026 the execution of work is expected to be completed in time to meet the April 2029 compliance deadline.