

EPA PFAS Standard Setting Process

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NGA Center for Best Practices

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Today's Speakers



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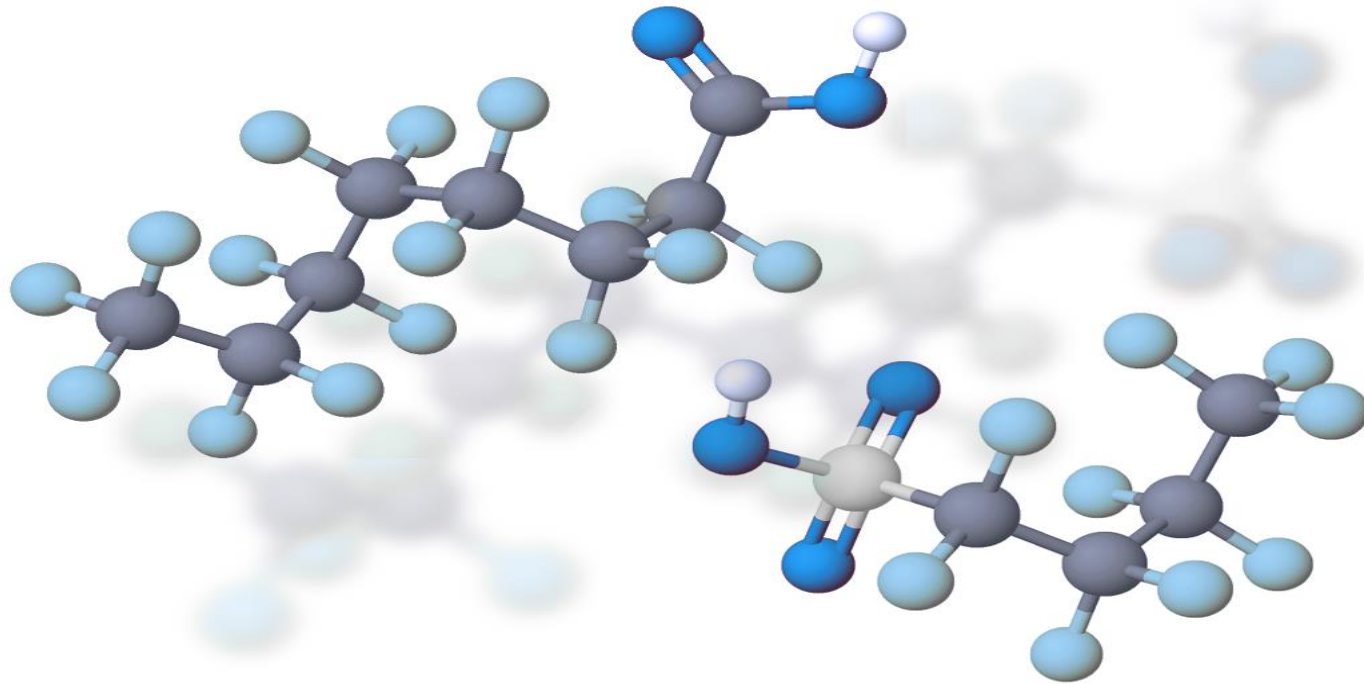
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EPA Actions to Address PFAS

August 13, 2020



Background

- Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of man-made chemicals that have been in use since the 1940s.
- PFAS are (or have been) found in a wide array of consumer products like cookware, food packaging, and stain and water repellants used in fabrics, carpets and outerwear.
- PFAS can also be found at manufacturing and processing facilities, and airports and military installations that use firefighting foams which contain PFAS.

PFAS Action Plan

- Aggressively addressing PFAS continues to be an active and ongoing priority for EPA.
- EPA's PFAS Action Plan was developed based on feedback from various community events in addition to information received from approximately 120,000 comments submitted to the public docket.
- EPA has made significant progress implementing the PFAS Action Plan—the most comprehensive cross-agency plan ever to address an emerging chemical of concern.
- EPA efforts are helping states, tribes, and local communities across the country target PFAS reductions and protect public health.

PFAS Action Plan

- The PFAS Action Plan aims to accomplish three main goals:
 - Demonstrate federal leadership on this critical issue.
 - Provide a multi-media, multi-program, unified approach to addressing PFAS.
 - Respond to the extensive public input the agency has received and encourage continued partnerships with the federal family, states, and communities.
- Over the past year and half, EPA has built on the momentum the launch of the PFAS Action Plan put in motion, and the agency's efforts have been extensive.

Highlighted Actions

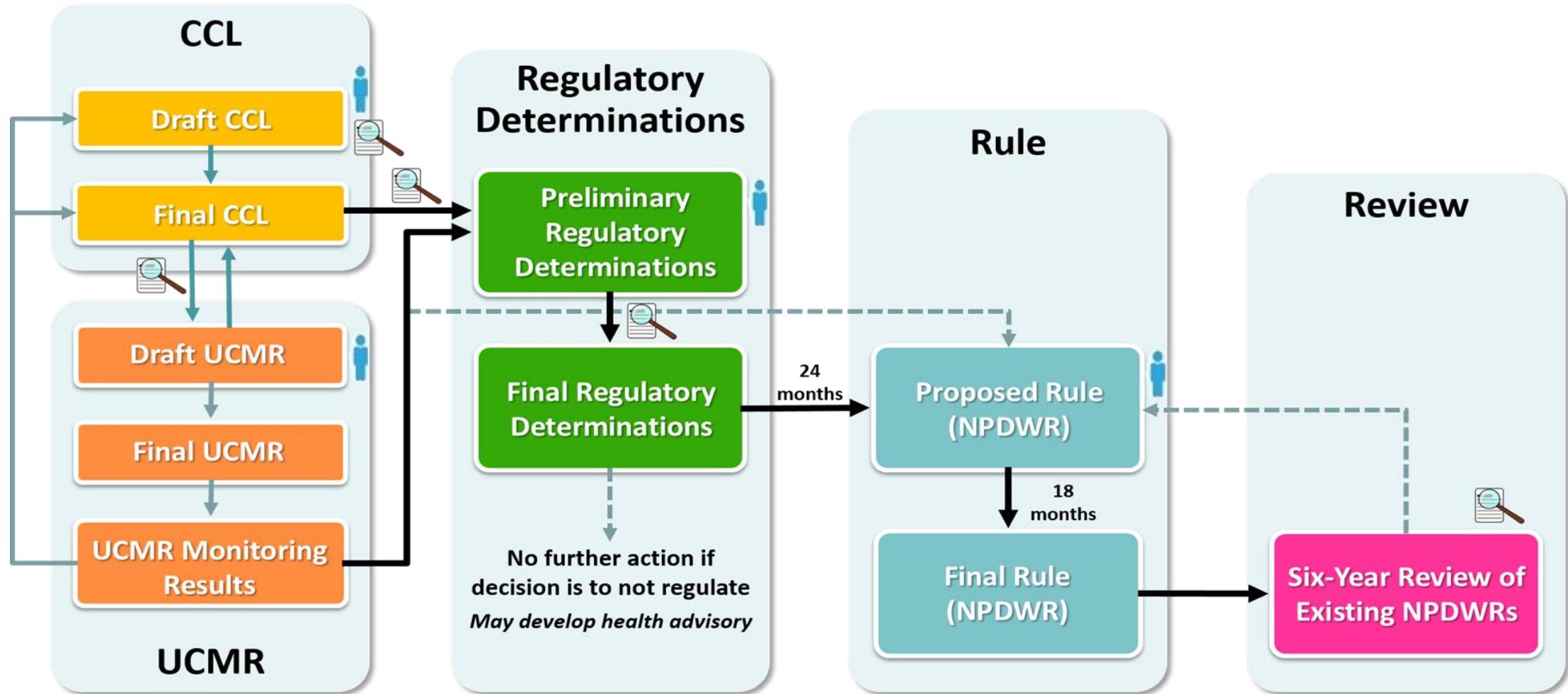
Drinking Water

- In February 2020, EPA took another important step in implementing the Agency's PFAS Action Plan by proposing to regulate PFOA and PFOS drinking water.
- EPA is also asking for information and data on other PFAS substances, as well as seeking comment on potential monitoring requirements and regulatory approaches EPA is considering for PFAS chemicals.
- In December 2019, EPA accomplished a key milestone in the PFAS Action Plan by publishing a new validated method to accurately test for 11 additional PFAS in drinking water.
 - Method 533 complements EPA Method 537.1, and we can now measure 29 chemicals.

Monitoring

- In July 2020, EPA transmitted the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule 5 (UCMR 5) proposal to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for interagency review. EPA anticipates proposing nationwide drinking water monitoring for PFAS that uses new methods that can detect PFAS at lower concentrations than previously possible.

SDWA-Process for Developing Drinking Water Standards



Highlighted Actions

Toxics

- In September 2019, EPA issued an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking that would allow the public to provide input on adding PFAS to the Toxics Release Inventory toxic chemical list.
- In May 2020, EPA issued a final regulation that added a list of 172 PFAS chemicals to Toxics Release Inventory reporting as required by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020.
- In June 2020, EPA issued a final regulation that can stop products containing PFAS from entering or reentering the marketplace without EPA's explicit permission.

Highlighted Actions

Cleanup

- In December 2019, EPA issued *Interim Recommendations for Addressing Groundwater Contaminated with PFOA and PFOS*, which provides guidance for federal cleanup programs (e.g., CERCLA and RCRA) that will also be helpful to states and tribes.
 - The recommendations provide a starting point for making site specific cleanup decisions and will help protect drinking water resources in communities across the country.
- In July 2020, EPA submitted the Interim Guidance on the Destruction and Disposal of PFAS and Materials Containing PFAS to OMB for interagency review. The guidance would:
 - Provide information on technologies that may be feasible and appropriate for the destruction or disposal of PFAS and PFAS-containing materials.
 - Identify ongoing research and development activities related to destruction and disposal technologies, which may inform future guidance.
- EPA is working on the proposed rule to designate PFOA and PFOS as hazardous substances under CERCLA. In the absence of the rule, EPA has used its existing authorities to compel cleanups.

Enforcing Federal Regulations

Enforcement

- EPA continues to use enforcement tools, when appropriate, to address PFAS exposure in the environment and assists states in enforcement activities.
- EPA has already taken actions to address PFAS, including issuing Safe Drinking Water Act orders and providing support to states. [See examples in the PFAS Action Plan.](#)
- In May 2020, EPA and Swix Sport USA finalized [an agreement](#) resolving Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) violations associated with the importation of noncompliant ski wax products containing PFAS.

Research and Scientific Innovation

- Robust information about PFAS chemicals is needed to better understand risk and to be able to take the right actions to protect public health and the environment.
 - This is why EPA has placed such a strong emphasis on research and why this work continues to be vital to efforts to address PFAS.
- EPA's research is helping to deepen the agency's understanding of these chemicals so that the agency can take the right steps to continue reducing the risks to public health and provide certainty to our state customers.
- EPA research is also helping identify tools to remove PFAS from the environment and protect public health.

Research and Scientific Innovation

- **Methods to Detect and Measure PFAS** – Researchers are developing methods to find and measure PFAS in the air, drinking water, ground water, soil, and more.
- **Understanding Toxicity** – Researchers are working to understand how toxic or harmful PFAS are to people and to the environment. These studies allow the agency to better understand how harmful specific chemicals can be and help prioritize the agency’s work to protect public health.
- **Analyzing Exposure** – Researchers are developing and testing ways to describe and understand where PFAS come from and how people may be exposed. This includes developing databases so the agency can see where PFAS may be in the environment and also developing models that help predict how PFAS may move through the environment.

Research and Scientific Innovation

- **Removing PFAS from Drinking Water** – Researchers are studying how effective various technologies are at removing PFAS from drinking water. This includes studying how well the technologies work and whether they can remove different types of PFAS. Researchers are also studying household water filters so that you have the information you need to protect the water in your own home.
- **Managing and Disposing of PFAS** – Researchers are working hard to help understand how materials that contain PFAS should be safely managed and disposed. EPA researchers are doing tests to figure out the best ways to dispose of PFAS (e.g., incineration, landfilling, composting) and to understand how PFAS at a contaminated industrial site may move into the nearby environment.

Research – PFAS Innovative Treatment Team (PITT)

- A full-time, multi-disciplined research team concentrating on a single problem: how to remove, destroy, and test PFAS-contaminated media and waste
- **PITT's Goals:**
 - Assess current and emerging methods being explored by EPA, universities, other research organizations, and industry
 - Evaluate efficacy of promising approaches considering byproducts to avoid creating new environmental hazards
 - Evaluate feasibility, performance, and economic considerations to validate potential solutions
- The results of this rapid research project are expected later this year.
- **Impact:** Provide states, tribes, and local governments with data on viable approaches for destruction/disposal of PFAS leading to confidence in cleanup operations and safer communities

State Support and Technical Assistance

- “With federal technical assistance efforts underway across the country, the Trump Administration is bringing much needed support to state, tribal, and local governments as part of the agency’s unprecedented efforts under the PFAS Action Plan. These partnerships allow for collaboration, encourage cutting edge research, and information sharing—ensuring that our joint efforts are effective and protective of public health.”

EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler

State Support and Technical Assistance

- Just as important as the progress on PFAS at the federal level, EPA has formed partnerships with states, tribes, and local communities across the country.
- These joint projects allow EPA to take the knowledge of its world class scientists and apply it in a collaborative fashion where it counts most.
 - In July 2020, EPA presented results on analyses of PFAS in chrome electroplating operations on a webinar hosted by the **Michigan** Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy.
 - In conjunction with the **New Hampshire** Department of Environmental Services, EPA provided analyses of PFAS in air emissions, char, and dispersants at an industrial site, along with analyses of PFAS in water (surface/ground) and soil collected in proximity to this site.
 - At the request of **West Virginia** Department of Environmental Protection, EPA scientists analyzed PFAS samples collected during air emission testing at an industrial facility near Parkersburg.

EPA PFAS Grants and Funding

- In May 2019, EPA awarded approximately **\$3.9 million** through two grants for research that will improve understanding of human and ecological exposure to PFAS in the environment. The research will also promote a greater awareness of how to restore water quality in PFAS-impacted communities.
- In September 2019, we awarded nearly **\$6 million** to fund research by eight organizations to expand understanding of the environmental risks posed by PFAS in waste streams and to identify practical approaches to manage the potential impacts as PFAS enters the environment.
- In August 2020, we will be awarding **\$4.8 million** in funding for federal research helping to identify potential impacts of PFAS to farms, ranches, and rural communities.

Collaboration

EPA is collaborating with many federal and state partners

- State associations and more than 30 individual states.
- USDA and FDA to examine the impacts of PFAS on agriculture, rural communities, and food supplies.
- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences' (NIEHS) National Toxicology Program on assessing PFAS toxicity.
- DOD on analytical methods and approaches for PFAS cleanup.
- National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine and other federal agencies to coordinate federal research and identifying research gaps.

Risk Communications

- EPA is working collaboratively to develop a risk communication toolbox for federal, state, tribal, and local partners to use with the public.

Questions for Speakers?

- ▶ Use the 'Q&A' or 'Chat' icons on the control panel at the bottom of your screen to submit your questions
- ▶ Include your name, title, and affiliation



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Thank You!

