

ST. MARY'S COUNTY METROPOLITAN COMMISSION PFAS FACTS



Purpose: In order to respond to public inquiries regarding PFAS and the Navy's historical use of Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF), it is important that MetCom provide a uniform and consistent response. "PFAS" is short for Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances, which includes PFOS (*Perfluoro-1-octanesulfonic acid*) and PFOA (*Perfluoro-n-octanoic acid*) manmade chemicals. The following bullet points are being provided for informational purposes and as a collective response:

- The Metropolitan Commission's public drinking water supply is in complete compliance with all existing state and federal public drinking water regulations. We publish all Water Quality Reports on our website @ <http://www.metcom.org> under the Operations tab.
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) determine what contaminants drinking water is to be tested for. They dictate the testing schedule, based on current regulations. The Metropolitan Commission follows these requirements and we do not test for PFAS as it is not required by the EPA or MDE.
- The Commission withdraws all drinking water from deep confined aquifers (*Aquia* and *Patapsco Aquifers*) that are located 500 feet deep or more below the surface. PFAS related contamination is typically found in the shallow surface and groundwater layers that are 100 feet deep or less.
- AFFF is an abbreviation for Aqueous Film Forming Foam which is a fire suppressant used to extinguish fuel fires.
- PFAS is an abbreviation for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances.
- More information regarding PFAS is located at MDE's website @ https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Water/water_supply/Pages/PFAS_Home.aspx
- A list of MDE Certified Water Quality Labs are available @ https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Water/water_supply/Documents/MD_Cert_Drink_Water_Lab_List.pdf.
- Since PFAS is an organic chemical, any lab that tests for organic chemicals or VOC's (*volatile organic chemicals*) should be able to assist individual property owners if they wish to test their private wells / water supply.
- Any inquiries regarding PFAS as it may relate to the Navy may be directed to the base's environmental director, Lance McDaniel at lance.mcdaniel@navy.mil
- Beginning **August 31, 2021**, MDE will be conducting PFAS sampling at various public water well sites in St. Mary's County. [Click here](#) for the results. Samples were analyzed under EPA Method 537.1. More information on PFAS and the St. Mary's River Pilot study and the results are posted on [MDE's website](#). PFAS were not detected in the samples collected in the system.
- Currently, there are no enforceable national or state Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) for PFAS in drinking water, however the USEPA has established a Health Advisory Level (HAL) of 70 parts per trillion (ppt) for the sum of Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS). This HAL provides drinking water customers, including the most sensitive populations, a margin of protection from lifetime exposure to PFOA and PFOS. As part of this sampling program, MDE has also set project-specific action levels for PFOA+PFOS of 35 ppt and 28 ppt that will serve as triggers for additional sampling.

