

## Next Newsletter

The next newsletter  
will be released in  
May 2021.

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## CONTACT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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[https://ar.afcec-  
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- From the "Installation List" on the left, scroll down and select "Ellsworth AFB, SD"
- If you know the AR number enter it next to "AR #" and click "Search"
- Click on the magnifying glass to open
- Numerous other search blocks can be used

## PFOS/PFOA Update: Long-Term Solutions

In January 2021, the U.S. Air Force signed the Action Memorandum, which documents the chosen alternatives to provide an alternate drinking water source to residents with drinking water wells with perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) concentrations above the U.S. EPA Lifetime Health Advisory (HA). The document is AR# 8692 on the Administrative Record (see sidebar on the left for instructions).

The U.S. Air Force is currently discussing implementation options for carrying out the chosen alternatives with the South Dakota Ellsworth Development Authority.

## PFOS/PFOA Update: Municipal Connections and Treatment Systems Installed and/or Pending

PFOS and PFOA are man-made compounds present in many products like nonstick cookware, stain-resistant fabric and carpet, and some food packaging. They were also present in aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF), a fire-fighting foam which the U.S. Air Force started using in 1970.

The U.S. Air Force has replaced legacy AFFF in fire vehicles, stockpiles, and hangar systems with a more environmentally responsible formulation. Legacy AFFF was last used at Ellsworth AFB in November 2016.

## East Waterline Update: TCE, PFOS, and PFOA

In the 1990s, the U.S. Air Force installed the East Off-Base Waterline (see reverse for location) to provide an alternate source of drinking water to residents whose groundwater was impacted by trichloroethylene (TCE). The waterline was turned over to the City of Box Elder in 2006. The U.S. Air Force has paid water bills for several residences until cleanup activities are completed consistent with the Record of Decision for Operable Unit 11 (Basewide Groundwater).

In 2016, the U.S. EPA established the drinking water Lifetime HA for PFOS/PFOA of 70 parts per trillion (ppt).

Starting in 2017, the U.S. Air Force identified and sampled drinking water wells for PFOS/PFOA in the areas east, south, and west of Ellsworth AFB.

The following is an update on the ongoing efforts to address impacts to the 30 properties (served by 25 wells) with PFOS/PFOA above the Lifetime HA:

Results from August 2020 groundwater samples indicate TCE cleanup goals have been met. Residences receiving water at no charge will soon be responsible for paying their own water bills.

The August 2020 groundwater samples were also analyzed for PFOS/PFOA, which were detected above the Lifetime HA in 25 of the 30 monitor wells. PFOS concentrations ranged from not detected (ND) to 4,680 ppt. PFOA concentrations

## Interested in a Formal RAB?

A Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) is a community stakeholder group that meets on a regular basis to discuss environmental restoration at a specific installation. RABs enable people interested in environmental cleanup to exchange information with the installation and regulatory agencies.

RABs can provide valuable input to the installation and regulators on decisions, but RABs are not decision making bodies.

Ellsworth AFB had an active formal RAB in the 1990s; however, community involvement declined. Ellsworth AFB is currently assessing community support for re-establishing the RAB.

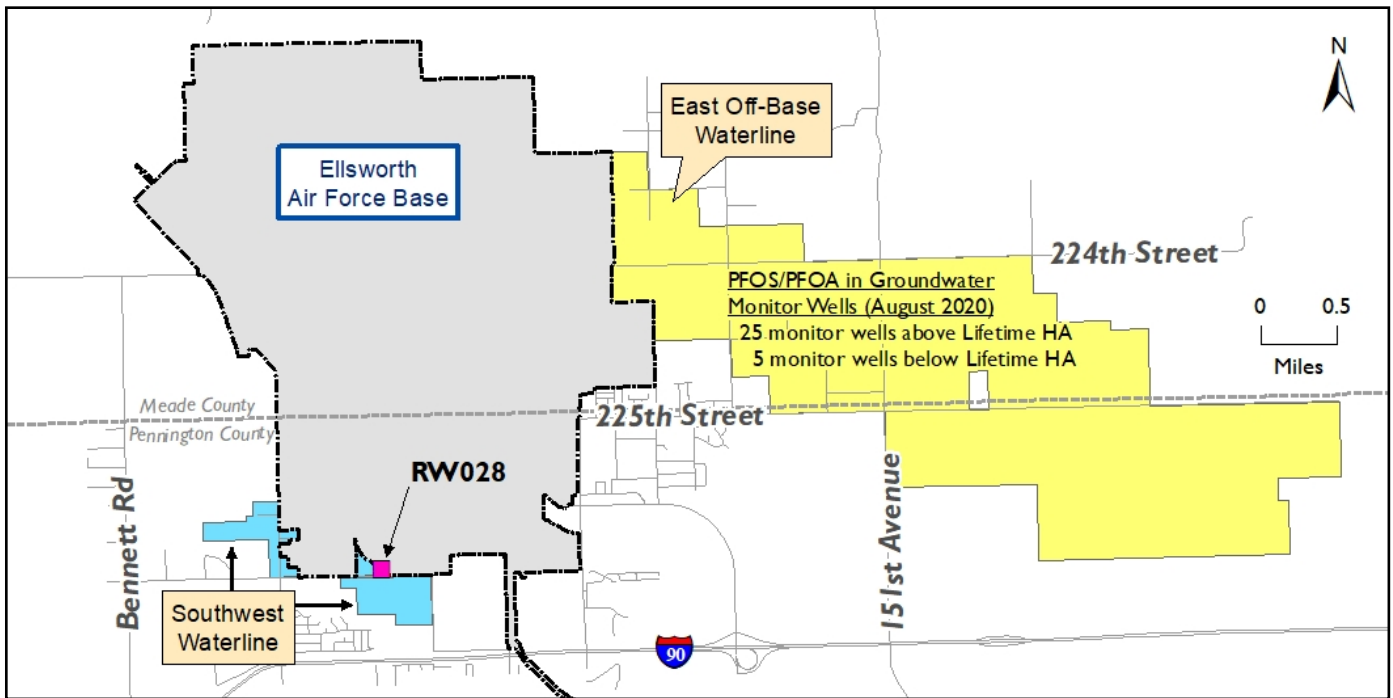
If you are interested in getting involved in the environmental restoration process at Ellsworth, either as a RAB member or by attending RAB meetings, please contact Ms. Rita Krebs at (605) 385-2688 or Mr. Jens Christensen at (605)385-6625.

- 6 properties were connected to existing municipal systems;
- 21 filtration systems were installed at 19 properties and a filtration system is planned for 1 additional property;
- 1 large treatment system was installed at a property serving ~ 66 residences; and
- 3 properties will be connected to an existing municipal system once rights-of-entry are signed.

ranged from ND to 320 ppt. The report is AR# 8693 on the Administrative Record (see sidebar on the left for instructions).

Potable water transmitted by the City of Box Elder-operated East Waterline is **not** affected. Groundwater is not used for drinking water purposes and impacts will be addressed after the ongoing Remedial Investigation is complete.

Visit <https://ar.afcec-cloud.af.mil/> for the most current information.



Locations of the East and Southwest Waterlines and the RW028 site.

## Update: PFOS/PFOA Quarterly Sampling Program

If initial PFOS/PFOA results from a drinking water well are below the Lifetime HA (70 parts per trillion [ppt]), but above one-half the Lifetime HA (35 ppt), the well is placed into the quarterly monitoring program. Wells in the quarterly monitoring program will be sampled for one

year and if results continue to remain below the Lifetime HA and do not show an increasing trend, the well will then be sampled annually for two years.

Currently, two drinking water wells remain in the quarterly monitoring program. These wells have at least one year

of sample results to date. One well exhibits stable trends below the Lifetime HA and will now be sampled annually for two years. The other well exhibits increasing trends but continues to be below the Lifetime HA and will continue to be sampled on a quarterly basis.

## RW028 Proposed Plan

In 1997, two concrete burial monoliths presumed to contain low-level radioactive waste were removed from RW028 (Low Level Radioactive Waste Burial Site), located at the southern boundary of the Base (see figure above). Based on historical records, the monoliths may have contained luminous instrument dials and markers, electronic tubes, valve knobs and handles, and experimental items. Chemical Agent Identification Sets (training aids) were also removed during the 1997 removal action. In 2019, an *Interim Removal Action* was conducted at RW028 to remove a third monolith unexpectedly discovered in 2011.

A *Remedial Investigation* was also completed in 2019 to make sure no additional monoliths or other waste remain at the site. Field activities included investigation of

geophysical anomalies and removal of trash and metal debris. No contamination was identified and no risks to current and future receptors were identified.

The *Proposed Plan* presents the U.S. Air Force's recommended preferred alternative for RW028, which is no further action. The U.S. Air Force invites the public to comment on the Proposed Plan and the 30-day public comment period is from February 15 through March 18, 2021. The U.S. Air Force will prepare a *Responsiveness Summary* to address any public comments received.

The RW028 Proposed Plan is AR# 8696 on the Administrative Record website (see sidebar on the left side of the first page for instructions).

### NEED YOUR DRINKING WATER WELL SAMPLED FOR PFOS/PFOA?

We made every effort to identify and sample all drinking water wells in the survey area; however, not all properties were accessible.

If you have a shallow well used for drinking water and would like the U.S. Air Force to sample it for PFOS/PFOA, please contact Ms. Rita Krebs at (605) 385-2688.

### Important Sources of Information on PFOS/PFOA:

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: [www.epa.gov/pfas](http://www.epa.gov/pfas)
- U.S. Air Force Civil Engineer Center: [www.afcec.af.mil/WhatWeDo/Environment/Perfluorinated-Compounds/](http://www.afcec.af.mil/WhatWeDo/Environment/Perfluorinated-Compounds/)