



Air Force Civil Engineer Center 3-Step Approach

Identify – Respond – Prevent

Air Force Civil Engineer Center (AFCEC) is taking a three-step approach to assess and respond to potential perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) drinking water contamination. PFOS and PFOA are two substances classified as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

1. Identify
2. Respond
3. Prevent

The Air Force's investigation work and mitigation actions are guided by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, or CERCLA, applicable state laws and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) drinking water Lifetime Health Advisory (LHA) for PFOS and PFOA. Following the CERCLA process makes certain thorough investigative work is done; the process also promotes accountability, community involvement, and long-term protectiveness.

1. Identify releases, investigate PFAS

Preliminary Assessments (PA):

Identify fire training areas, crash sites and areas at installations where Aqueous Film-Forming Foam (AFFF) was used. As of the Spring of 2017, most of the PAs are complete.

Site Inspections (SI):

Conduct groundwater, surface water, soil, and sediment sampling to verify releases of PFAS and map possible pathways to drinking water sources. If the SI sampling indicates the presence of PFOS and PFOA above the EPA LHAs, potential pathways to off-base drinking water supplies will be identified. AFCEC may test public water systems and private wells.

2. Respond to drinking water contamination

Mitigation:

If levels of PFOS and PFOA exceed the LHA in drinking water the Air Force will provide an alternate drinking water source. This could be:

- Bottled water
- Installation of a filtration system
- Connecting impacted private well owners to a public drinking water supply

If sample results are detectable for PFOS and PFOA but below the LHAs in drinking water, the Air Force may conduct additional sampling as needed to track level changes and determine if further action is necessary.

3. Prevent future contamination

AFFF Replacement:

The Air Force is replacing legacy AFFF in fire vehicles, stockpiles, and hangar systems with more environmentally responsible formulations.

Retrofit Fire Vehicles:

The Air Force is retrofitting fire vehicles with a system that prevents foam discharge during equipment testing and training. Retrofitting approximately 850 fire trucks will take 15 months and will be complete by December 2018.