



# ENSURING A SAFE WATER SUPPLY IN THE AGE OF FOREVER CHEMICALS

With concern growing about the presence in some water supplies of a family of chemicals known as PFAS, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California continues to ensure the region has a safe and reliable drinking water supply.

Two types of PFAS – Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) – are the most commonly used, studied and regulated PFAS in the U.S. No PFOA or PFOS have been detected in Metropolitan’s imported water supplies.

The chemicals have, however, been detected in some groundwater wells in the region. Metropolitan is working with its member agencies to build understanding about how PFAS have affected the region’s water supplies and is supporting local agencies as they assess whether the chemicals are present in their groundwater. Metropolitan stands prepared to handle any increased demands for its imported water that may result from the loss of any affected local supplies.

## What are PFAS, PFOA and PFOS?

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) are a family of more than 4,500 chemicals, including PFOA and PFOS, widely used in products that resist heat, oils, stains and water.



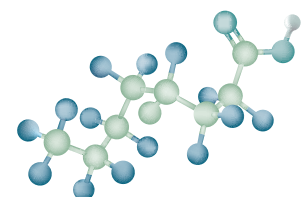
### FOREVER CHEMICALS



## Health Effects

PFOA is a possible human carcinogen, according to the International Agency for Research on Cancer. High concentrations in the body of PFOA and PFOS have also been linked to:

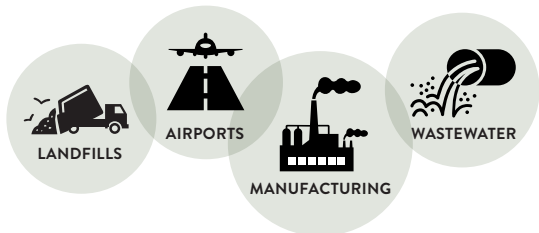
- High cholesterol
- Thyroid and liver disease
- Decreased fertility
- Lower birth weights
- Decreased response to vaccines
- Pregnancy-induced hypertension



# Where Have PFOA and PFOS Been Found?

PFOA and PFOS **have not** been detected in Metropolitan’s source or treated water, but they have been found in some groundwater wells in the region. After being generated elsewhere, the chemicals have entered the water cycle through landfills; treated wastewater discharge; sites where

the chemicals were used in manufacturing; and facilities where the chemicals were used in firefighting training, like airports and military bases. Because of their inability to break down and resiliency, the chemicals can accumulate, leading to elevated levels in the groundwater near those sites. Although the chemicals need to be addressed at their source, the potential for PFAS to collect in groundwater is a major concern. The process to address affected groundwater is underway.



## Ensuring Safe Drinking Water

If a water agency detects PFOA or PFOS in its water at unacceptable levels, it can:

- Treat it using activated carbon, reverse osmosis or ion exchange
- Remove the supply from service and find an alternative supply
- Blend it with other, unaffected supplies

Metropolitan is ready to assist our member agencies with additional imported water supplies to offset any potential loss of local supply.



## Emerging Regulations

State and federal lawmakers and regulators are moving toward stricter standards and guidelines for the detection, public notification and removal of PFOA and PFOS in drinking water.

<p><b>U.S. Environmental Protection Agency</b></p>	<p><b>Current:</b> Drinking water health advisory of 70 parts per trillion (ppt) for a combined concentration of PFOA and PFOS. If exceeded, EPA recommends agencies assess the contamination, inform customers and limit exposure.</p>	<p><b>Future:</b> EPA is establishing drinking water regulations for PFOA and PFOS, including an enforcement mechanism, by setting a Maximum Contaminant Level.</p>
<p><b>California State Water Resources Control Board</b></p>	<p><b>Current:</b> <b>Notification level</b> for PFOA is 5.1 ppt and for PFOS is 6.5 ppt. If exceeded, agencies are required to notify their governing bodies and SWRCB recommends they inform customers. <b>Response level</b> of 70 ppt for a combined concentration of PFOA and PFOS. If exceeded, the SWRCB recommends removal of the drinking water source from service.</p>	<p><b>Future:</b> The SWRCB is lowering the response levels for PFOA and PFOS in fall 2019. It is also increasing required monitoring and customer notifications for the chemicals, in compliance with a new state law.</p>

### ABOUT METROPOLITAN

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a state-established cooperative of 26 member agencies – cities and public water agencies – that serve nearly 19 million people in six counties. Metropolitan imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California to supplement local supplies and helps its members develop increased water conservation, recycling, storage and other resource management programs.

### OUR MISSION

The mission of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is to provide its service area with adequate and reliable supplies of high-quality water to meet present and future needs in an environmentally and economically responsible way.



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