**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**PFAS Regulatory Actions and Guidance Values**

**What are the per- and polyfluroalkyl substances (PFAS) safe drinking water levels?**

In May 2016, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) issued [a lifetime health advisory (LHA) for PFAS](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-05/documents/drinkingwaterhealthadvisories_pfoa_pfos_5_19_16.final_.1.pdf) in drinking water, advising municipalities that they should notify their customers of the presence of levels over 70 nanograms per liter (or parts per trillion) in community water supplies. The LHA is the level, or amount, calculated to offer a margin of protection against adverse health effects to the most sensitive populations. The LHA level is 70 (ppt) for PFOA and PFOS individually or combined. Currently, the EPA has not set health advisory levels for the other PFAS chemicals.

[Learn more about US EPA’s actions on PFAS and other perfluorinated chemicals](https://www.epa.gov/pfas).

In June 2018, the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) recommended interim notification levels for PFOA (based on liver toxicity, as well as cancer risks) and for PFOS (based on immunotoxicity). OEHHA made these recommendations following its review of currently available health-based advisories and standards and supporting documentation. After independent review of the available information on the risks, the California State Water Resources Control Board’s Division of Drinking Water (DDW) [established notification levels](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/PFOA_PFOS.html.) at concentrations of 13 ppt for PFOS and 14 ppt for PFOA, consistent with OEHHA’s recommendations.

**What is California doing?**

California’s DDW has established notification levels for PFOS and PFOA (13 parts per trillion for PFOS and 14 parts per trillion for PFOA), as well as a single health advisory response level which offers a margin of protection for all persons throughout their life from adverse health effects resulting from exposure to PFOA and PFOS in drinking water.  When possible, DDW recommends treating impacted wells when the concentration of PFOA or PFOS exceed their respective notification levels of 13 and 14 ppt. DDW recommends removing impacted wells from service when the concentration level cannot be reduced below the level of 70 ppt.

In November 2017, [OEHHA added PFOA and PFOS under Proposition 65](https://oehha.ca.gov/proposition-65/crnr/chemicals-listed-effective-november-10-2017-known-state-california-cause), which requires manufacturers to disclose the presence of these chemicals as a potential carcinogenic compound in materials in which they are present. Documentation supporting OEHHA’s determination that the criteria for administrative listing have been satisfied for PFOA and PFOS is available on [OEHHA’s website](https://oehha.ca.gov/proposition-65/crnr/notice-intent-list-perfluorooctanoic-acid-pfoa-and-perfluorooctane-sulfonate).

[Learn more about California Waterboards actions on PFAS and other perfluorinated chemicals](http://waterboards.ca.gov/pfas)

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) included food packaging as a product category in the [Safer Consumer Products 2018-20 Work Plan](https://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SCP/upload/Draft_2018-2020_Priority_Product_Work_Plan.pdf) due to concerns regarding exposure to PFAS and other chemicals included in food packaging, including the migration of PFAS from food packaging into packaged foods, becoming indirect food additives.

On February 15, 2018, DTSC released its [Product-Chemical Profile on Carpets and Rugs with PFASs](https://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SCP/upload/Product-Chemical-Profile-PFAS-Carpets-and-Rugs.PDF), documenting potential exposures and harm from these products. The Priority Product listing regulation triggers requirements that manufacturers look for safer alternatives. The process to make the requirements into regulations is likely to begin in the spring of 2019.

In October 2018, DTSC sent a request for information letter concerning PFAS substances to hazardous waste treatment, storage and disposal facilities. The due date for responding to the letter was November 16, 2018.  DTSC sent out 94 letters and has received 74 responses.  The responses are currently being analyzed.

In June 2018, California Air Resources Board (CARB) began a rulemaking effort to amend the [Hexavalent Chromium Airborne Toxic Control Measure for Chrome Plating and Chromic Acid Anodizing Operations (Chrome Plating ATCM)](https://www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/chrome/chrome.htm).Throughout this process, CARB staff is collecting information and soliciting input on ways to further reduce emissions of hexavalent chromium from chrome plating and chromic acid anodizing operations, and to address concerns about potential health and environmental impacts of PFAS-containing chemical fume suppressants.

Biomonitoring California’s Scientific Guidance Panel designated PFAS as a program priority. Its [California Regional Exposure (CARE) study](https://biomonitoring.ca.gov/care) includes 12 PFAS chemicals and is analyzing sources of exposures in the Asian Pacific Islander Community Exposure projects.