

PFAS PROTECTION ACT



Toxic PFAS in our drinking water: PFAS chemicals have been found in seafood and drinking water in Maryland.

“Forever chemicals”

PFAS are a class of [more than 9000 chemicals](#) used to make products grease- or water-proof, most of which are still in use today.

These man-made chemicals don't break down in the environment, earning them the nickname “forever chemicals.” They also build up in our bodies over time, a dangerous combination.

Contamination and exposure

Maryland, like many states, does not require testing for PFAS in drinking water, but recent studies found high levels of PFAS chemicals in [seafood, drinking water](#), and at various [military sites in Maryland](#).

Marylanders are also exposed to PFAS in consumer products and in food packaging.

Firefighters, active military and their families, and children are most at risk of PFAS exposure, but everyone is at risk.

SB195 / HB22

Sen. Elfreth and Del. Love

This bill restricts the use and disposal of toxic PFAS chemicals:

- Turns off the tap on new contamination: stops the use of PFAS in firefighting foam (like [WA](#), [NH](#), [CA](#)), food packaging (like [NY](#), [WA](#), [ME](#)), and in rugs and carpets.
- Protects our air and water by banning the mass disposal of these chemicals by incineration ([NY](#)) and landfilling ([CA](#))

Protecting public health

Elevated levels of PFAS in blood has been associated with [health concerns](#), including:

- Cancer
- Hormone disruption,
- Immune suppression
- Reproductive problems.

According to an [August 2020 report from the nation and world's leading PFAS experts](#):

“Managing PFAS one-by-one is neither feasible nor cost-efficient. More comprehensive solutions are needed, given that traditional approaches have failed to control widespread exposures to PFAS and resulted in inadequate public health protection. We suggest class-based options to more comprehensively and efficiently reduce PFAS exposure.”

PFAS PROTECTION ACT



Maryland restricts the use of PFAS foam for training purposes. It's time for a comprehensive restriction.

PFAS in firefighting foam

Firefighting foam for civilian and military use is a [major source](#) of PFAS contamination but safer PFAS-free foams already exist and have been adopted around the U.S. and the world.

The firefighting community have been top [supporters of moving away from PFAS foam](#).

PFAS in rugs and carpets

Rugs and carpets can be treated with PFAS to make them more stain resistant. The manufacture of rugs and carpets poses environmental, public health, and worker safety concerns. And the chemicals can leach into household dust putting our families at risk.

Major retailers, rug companies, and states are moving away from PFAS in rugs and carpets, but not fast enough.



[Home Depot](#) and [Lowe's](#) have both committed to stop selling rugs and carpets treated with PFAS because of the impact on the environment and public health. These bans are both in effect by the end of January, 2021.

PFAS in food packaging

PFAS chemicals are used in [food packaging](#) to make them grease and water resistant. From hamburger wrappers and salad bowls to egg crates and microwave popcorn wrappers, safer alternatives already exist.



Fast food and grocery chains are phasing out PFAS coated food packaging because it can leach into the food, and pollutes our environment when it is trashed.

Protecting our air and water

When PFAS chemicals are incinerated they pollute the surrounding communities and environment. When PFAS chemicals are landfilled, they can leach into our groundwater, putting our drinking water at risk.

To protect our air and water we need to prevent the mass disposal of PFAS chemicals in landfills and incinerators.

Emily Scarr
Maryland PIRG Director
emily@marylandpirg.org
[@marylandpirg](https://twitter.com/marylandpirg)