



How to Reduce Exposure to PFAS in Your Tap Water

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What are PFAS?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a large family of chemicals in use since the 1950s, to make a wide variety of stain-resistant, water-resistant, and non-stick consumer products. Some examples include food packaging, outdoor clothing, and non-stick pans. PFAS also have many industrial uses because of their special properties. In Washington State, PFAS were used in certain types of firefighting foams.

How do I minimize my exposure to PFAS in drinking water?

Use an alternate source of water for drinking and cooking. Another option is to install home water treatment, such as reverse osmosis or an activated carbon filter, that is certified by the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) to lower the levels of PFAS in your water. Follow the manufacturer's maintenance and replacement recommendations.

Does bottled water contain PFAS?

PFAS have been found in some brands of bottled water. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not put enforceable limits in place yet. The International Bottled Water Association (IBWA) says it requires its members to test their bottled water products yearly for PFAS; and to limit PFAS in bottled water to 5 parts per trillion (ppt) for any one PFAS, or 10 ppt for more than one PFAS. These limits meet Washington State health advice, but might not meet new EPA health advisory levels for PFOA and PFOS.

Note: *Not all bottled water distributors are members of IBWA. You can check at bottledwater.org.*

Should I still breastfeed my baby if there are PFAS in my tap water?

If PFAS are above state action levels (levels put in place to protect human health) in your drinking water, we recommend that you switch to an alternate source of drinking water if available and continue to breastfeed your baby. Based on current science, the known benefits of breastfeeding appear to outweigh potential health risks of PFAS for infants in nearly every circumstance. Talk to your health care provider if you have concerns about PFAS and breastfeeding.

Should I use my tap water to mix infant formula if there is PFAS in my water?

If PFAS are above Washington State SALs in your tap water, we recommend you switch to an alternate source of water to mix your infant's formula.

Can I boil my water to get rid of PFAS?

No, you cannot boil PFAS out of water.

Can I bathe if there are PFAS in my tap water?

Yes. Showering or bathing are not a significant source of PFAS exposure.

Can I wash dishes and do laundry if there are PFAS in my tap water?

Yes. Doing laundry or washing dishes is not a significant source of PFAS exposure.

Can I water my garden with PFAS-contaminated water and eat that produce?

Studies show that some PFAS from soil or irrigation water can be absorbed by plants. The amount of PFAS that ends up in the edible portions varies by soil conditions, type of plant, and the type of PFAS and their concentration in soil and water.

If you are concerned, here are some ways to minimize exposure.

- ◆ Wash or scrub all dirt off produce before eating to avoid swallowing soil. PFAS may be in soil particles.
- ◆ Peel and wash root vegetables before eating.
- ◆ Add clean compost to your garden soil. Increasing the organic content of your garden soil can reduce the amount of PFAS your plants pick up from the soil.
- ◆ Use rainwater or install a filter to remove PFAS from garden irrigation water.

Can I water my livestock with PFAS-contaminated water?

PFAS can be absorbed from drinking water by farm animals and transferred into their eggs, meat, and milk. Regular consumption of these animal products could result in elevated exposure for an individual or family. There are no PFAS regulations or advisories to guide consumption of animal products. However, you can reduce your exposure if you:

- ◆ Avoid eating organ meats. PFAS can build up in liver, kidney, and the blood.
- ◆ Switch your animals to clean water or install a filter to remove PFAS from their drinking water.

For more information

Our [publications are online](#) or visit our [PFAS Contaminant webpage](#).

Contact our nearest regional office from 8 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday. If you have an after-hours emergency, call 877-481-4901.

[Eastern Region](#), Spokane Valley 509-329-2100.

[Northwest Region](#), Kent 253-395-6750.

[Southwest Region](#), Tumwater 360-236-3030.