



May 2025

# Updates to Public Water Supply Protections: Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

**WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?** *Group A Public Water Systems regulated by the Department of Health (DOH), and people who consume that water. Systems within tribal lands are not subject to [Chapter 246-290 WAC](#).*

In April 2024, the federal government published the first National Public Drinking Water Regulation for PFAS. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provided all states with six legal Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) for PFAS in public drinking water. An MCL is the maximum level of a contaminant allowable in a public water supply. Public water systems have five years to test for PFAS and ensure all water sources are below the MCLs. When the federal standards become effective, water systems that still exceed a PFAS MCL will be in violation and required to notify the public and take action to reduce PFAS values to the MCL or lower.

## What's Being Proposed?

The Board, in collaboration with DOH, is aligning the PFAS testing and reporting requirements in WAC 246-290-315 and 246-290-71006 with the new federal regulation. Because the EPA evaluated the most current scientific data to develop PFAS MCLs, these represent the best approach for health protective standards. The PFAS SAL values will be updated to the EPA MCL values to provide optimal protection from PFAS in the state's public drinking water. Draft changes will also maintain state efforts to ensure Group A systems continue state required testing for PFAS, make reporting requirements clearer and ease confusion about which set of health-based standards apply until the federal regulation becomes effective in April 2029. *PAGE 2 provides detail on current and proposed PFAS values.*

## Permanent Rulemaking and Engagement Timeline, and Resources

- *SEE PAGE 2 to learn how to stay up to date on the proposed PFAS Rulemaking timeline and comment periods.*
- The DOH [PFAS Basics Videos](#) offer a quick explanation of why PFAS can negatively impact environmental and human health, and how to lower exposure to certain PFAS in drinking water.
- Explore PFAS water testing results for your community [PFAS Testing Results Dashboard | Washington State Department of Health](#)
- Visit: [PFAS in Drinking Water—Group A Public Water System Support | Washington State Department of Health](#)
- For Water System Owners and Operators: [www.doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/drinking-water](http://www.doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/drinking-water)

<sup>1</sup> All group A community and non-transient, non-community water systems and transient non-community systems at risk.

<sup>2</sup> SALs do not apply to Tribes or public supplies that the Environmental Protection Agency regulates with federal drinking water laws.

## Details About the Draft Changes

### Updates to WAC 246-290-315

The changes to WAC 246-290-315(4) are to align the current SAL values to the federal MCL values. Washington currently regulates PFOA, PFOS, PFHxS, PFNA, and PFBS. The EPA adopted individual MCLs for four of these and added two new MCLs: one for HFPO-DA and Hazard Index MCL<sup>3</sup>, which modified how PFBS is evaluated when it is in the water supply. The table below shows the changes.

Current WA PFAS	Current SAL Value	Federal PFAS	Federal MCL Value (draft SAL Values)	Federal Method to Establish Exceedance of MCL value
PFOA	10 ng/L	PFOA	4.0 ng/L	Annual Running Average
PFOS	15 ng/L	PFOS	4.0 ng/L	Annual Running Average
PFHxS	65 ng/L	PFHxS	10 ng/L	Annual Running Average
PFNA	9 ng/L	PFNA	10 ng/L	Annual Running Average
PFBS	345 ng/L	The new Hazard Index calculation for mixtures of specific PFAS is used to account for PFBS in the water supply.		
		HFPO-DA	10 ng/L	Annual Running Average
		PFAS MIXTURES (uses Hazard Index)	1 (unitless)	Annual Running Average

The change to WAC 246-290-315(8) is to fix existing rule language so that current protections related to PFAS are kept in place until the new federal regulations are effective in April 2029.

New draft language was added to WAC 246-290-315(9) and (10), to ensure that all water systems in Washington follow the relevant testing and notification requirements. Not all water systems in Washington are covered under the federal drinking water regulations. Transient non-community water systems like campgrounds, vacation homes, and corner stores may be required to sample under state rules but not under federal rules.

### Updates to WAC 246-290-71006

Changes were made to WAC 246-290-71006 to align the method the state uses to calculate an MCL exceedance with the method in the federal rule and ensure that transient non-community water systems are not more stringently assessed.

## How to Get Involved

**To stay current with the Permanent Rulemaking timeline including future comment periods** (likely late May-September):

[Click Here to Subscribe for Water Rulemaking Email Updates](#)

[Group A Public Water Supplies - PFAS - Current Rulemakings | SBOH](#)

[Group A Public Water Supplies - PFAS Rulemaking | Washington State Department of Health](#)

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DOH & Board Email Contacts  
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**Board policy staff**

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the Hazard Index calculation: [FACT SHEET: Hazard Index MCL](#)