

# PFAS IN THE ENVIRONMENT

## WHAT ARE PFAS?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of thousands of human-made chemicals that do not break down over time. Their extreme longevity in the environment and resistance to destruction led to the nickname "forever chemicals." PFAS pollution threatens human health, the environment, and our economy.

**PFAS do not break down in the environment.**

## WHY ARE PFAS CONCERNING?

PFAS are linked to a variety of health complications including:

- Cancer
- Liver Disease
- Immune System Dysfunction
- Birth Defects & Complications During Pregnancy

PFAS have been found in the blood serum of nearly every American. This widespread exposure to PFAS in our communities is the result of decades of releases of PFAS into the environment and use of PFAS in commercial and industrial products.

## POTENTIAL SOURCES

- Old firefighting foams
- Personal care products
- Photographic processes
- Stain resistant products
- Mist suppressant in metal plating industry
- Aviation hydraulic fluids
- Floor polishes
- Paints
- Mining and oil well surfactants
- Pesticides and herbicides
- Water resistant and waterproof items

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Check labels of products that may contain PFAS. Chemical names including "fluoro" are likely PFAS.

- Consider PFAS-free alternatives such as ceramic-coated, glass, stainless steel or cast iron instead of "nonstick" cookware.
- Search [ewg.org/skindeep](http://ewg.org/skindeep) for alternative personal care products.
- Avoid buying items that are labeled "stain-resistant", "water-resistant", or water proof.

visit [www.owatonna.gov/pfas](http://www.owatonna.gov/pfas) for more information

