



PFAS and State Action Levels

Monitoring, Follow-up Actions, and Public Notice

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Between 2013 and 2015, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) required some public water systems to monitor for Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS). In addition, EPA's third Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR3) required all larger water systems and a few smaller systems to monitor for PFAS. Results from UCMR3 and additional testing at military bases identified several areas in Washington with PFAS in groundwater.

The State Board of Health (board) is revising the Group A rule to address concerns about PFAS and other contaminants that do not have a maximum contaminant level (MCL). The draft rule sets requirements for monitoring and reporting, follow-up actions, and public notice for contaminants without an MCL. The draft rule includes state action levels (SALs) for five PFAS compounds and other organic chemicals that have Department of Health (department)-established SALs—but that haven't been added to the Group A rule.

Monitoring

The draft rule would require all community and nontransient noncommunity water systems to monitor for PFAS. For transient noncommunity water systems the rule proposes monitoring only if the department directs them to do so because they are located near known or suspected sites of PFAS contamination.

There are no changes in monitoring for the other organic contaminants for which water systems already sample.

Source approval: The draft rule adds a requirement for water systems to sample new sources for PFAS as part of approval of new sources.

Initial, increased, and ongoing monitoring: The draft rule adds initial monitoring requirements for PFAS once every three years. Monitoring every three years is included as ongoing monitoring. The draft rule adds increased monitoring as a follow-up action in the case of detections. It would also require existing transient noncommunity water systems in areas of known PFAS contamination to monitor.

Waiver development: The draft rule has an option for future waivers from PFAS monitoring. Sources with low vulnerability to PFAS contamination may qualify for future waivers. PFAS data from Washington will be used to decide if and where waivers may be appropriate.

Take action as directed: The draft rule establishes that systems must take action as directed by the department on a case-by-case basis.

Follow-up Actions

Monitoring after detections: The draft rule includes a requirement for water systems with detections of unregulated contaminants, including PFAS, to conduct increased quarterly monitoring in the first year. (See Table 10, in section 315(8) of the draft rule language for details.)

Increased monitoring (for systems following the first detection).

First Year Highest Results	Total Number of Quarters Needed for Increased Monitoring (Including Initial Detection)
Low Less than or equal to 20% of SAL	2 quarters
Moderate Between 20% and 80% of SAL	3 quarters
High Greater than or equal to 80% of SAL	4 quarters

The frequency of ongoing monitoring (see Table 11, section 315(8) of the draft rule language for details) after a detection will depend the level of the contaminant detected in the impacted source.

Ongoing monitoring (Following increased monitoring per the above table).

Last Year of Results	Frequency
Low Less than or equal to 20% of SAL	Every 3 years
Moderate Between 20% and 80% of SAL	Annually
High Greater than or equal to 80% of SAL	Quarterly

If a water system installs treatment to remove a contaminant with a SAL, the draft rule will require quarterly monitoring to ensure the treatment is effective.

Public Notice

The draft rule includes a requirement that all water systems that exceed a SAL must inform customers about the health effects of the contaminant, what they are doing to address the issue, and what consumers can do to reduce their exposure. Timing and content of the public notice would depend on the health risks of the contaminant.

Because PFAS are bioaccumulative, the draft rule requires all water systems with confirmed detections of PFAS above a SAL to provide public notice to their customers as soon as possible. Public notice would be required quarterly if PFAS levels continue to exceed a SAL. The draft rule includes a requirement for community water systems to provide information on detected PFAS in their annual consumer confidence report.

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