



PUBLIC EMPLOYEES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

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Per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in Montgomery County drinking water

PEER tested tap water in three residences in Maryland – one in Poolesville, and two in Bethesda. The results are below. PEER is also reporting the lab results from the Washington Sanitary Sewer Commission (WSSC), which tests for 18 PFAS at the Potomac and Patuxent Filtration Plants. The lab reports were obtained through a Public Information Act request. The WSSC also posts PFAS test results on its website.

PFAS (in ppt)	Bethesda 1	Bethesda 2	Poolesville	WSSC 1/30/20 1	WSSC 1/30/20 2	WSSC 4/7/20 3	WSSC 4/7/20 4
Perfluorohexanoic acid (PFHxA)	4.4	9.1	1.5 J	2.2	1.6 J	2.7	1.8 J
Perfluoroheptanoic acid (PFHpA)	1.8	3.0	1.1 J	1.1 J	0.74 J	0.98 J	0.95 J
Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA)	3.1	5.1	3.6	1.9	1.4 J	1.9	1.4 J
Perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA)	0.56 J	1.1 J	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Perfluorobutanesulfonic acid (PFBS)	2.6	3.2	1.8	1.2 J	1.1 J	1.6 J	1.1 J
Perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS)	1.7	3.7	ND	0.83 J	0.85 J	1.3 J	0.75 J
Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS)	3.4	6.5	ND	1.3 J	1.7 J	2.3	1.2 J
Perfluorooctanesulfonamide (PFOSA)	0.98 J	2.8	3.2				
Perfluorobutanoic acid (PFBA)	3.6 J	5.7	2.7 J				
Perfluoropentanoic acid (PFCA)	4.8	8.6	1.5 J				
Perfluorodecanoic acid (PFDA)	ND	0.55 J	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
TOTAL	26.94	48.35	15.4	8.53	7.39	10.78	7.20

ND = non detect

J = estimated value (we know the PFAS is present, but cannot accurately estimate the precise amount; it is less than the reporting limit, but greater than or equal to the Method Detection Limit)

Blank = No test conducted

Maryland does not yet have a drinking water standard for PFAS. Massachusetts is finalizing a drinking water standard of 20 ppt for six of these PFAS (in red, above): PFOS, PFOA, PFDA, PFHpA, PFHxS, and PFNA. Bethesda 2 has a total of 19.95 ppt of these 6 chemicals. Given the two J values and the

possibility that these levels are even higher than estimated here, it is very possible the Bethesda 2 sample would be in violation of Massachusetts laws.

A 2013 study conducted by Dr. Philippe Grandjean of Harvard School of Public Health suggests that water concentration of PFOA should be no higher than 1 ng/L (1 ppt). See <https://ehjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1476-069X-12-35>. Moreover, Dr. Linda Birnbaum, former director of the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences, says that the drinking water limits for PFOA should be 0.1 ppt. See <https://theintercept.com/2019/06/18/pfoa-pfas-teflon-epa-limit/> All three of the samples of tap water in Maryland exceed these levels.

Lab Reports available on request