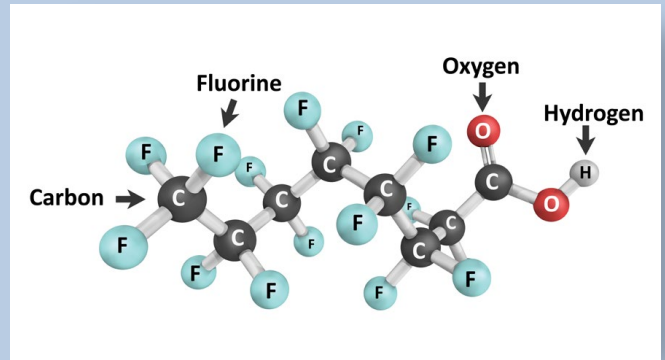


# Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)



## What are PFAS?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of more than 9,000 human-made chemicals used since the 1940s in many industrial processes and in a wide range of commercial and household products. Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) are two of the most closely studied PFAS. Many PFAS break down very slowly, giving them the nickname, “forever chemicals”.



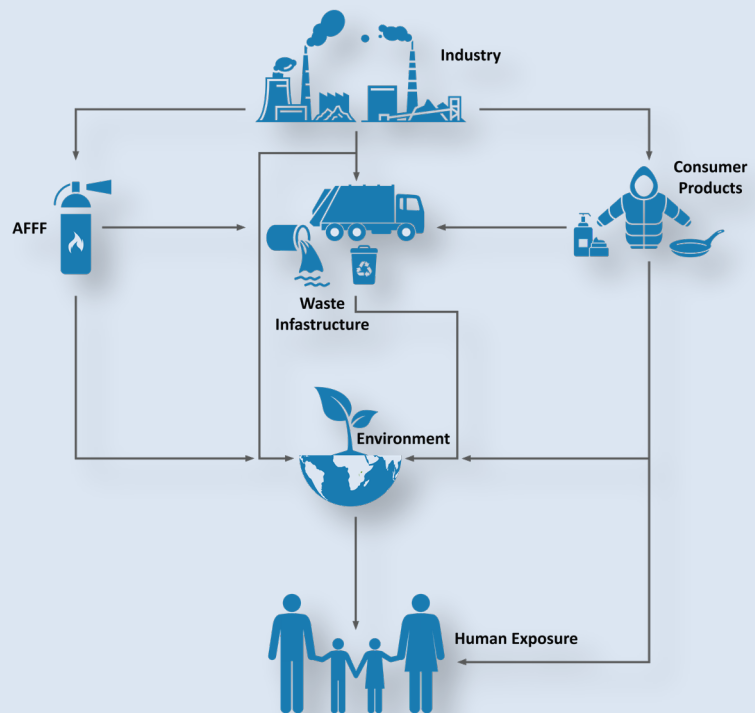
*PFOA Molecule*



## How are we exposed to PFAS?

PFAS are often found in products such as stain-resistant carpeting, water-resistant clothing, cookware, personal care products, food packaging, and firefighting foams.

### PFAS Exposure Pathways



Environmental releases of PFAS from manufacturing and processing, along with their widespread use, have resulted in the presence of PFAS in soil, sediment, drinking water, surface water, groundwater, and in animal and plant life. Due to their chemical structure, PFAS stay in the environment a very long time and do not break down into less harmful compounds. As a result, PFAS build up in humans, plants, and animals.

A federal health agency, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), labeled PFAS a public health concern. Growing concern resulting from health studies and from widespread presence of PFAS in the environment has led the federal Environmental Protection Agency to act to protect human health and the environment.

# DOE PFAS Mission Statement

*Protect human health and the environment by assessing and addressing PFAS at DOE sites while deploying the Department's scientific expertise to solve PFAS challenges*



## What is DOE doing?

Work at Department of Energy (DOE) begins with a commitment to human health and the environment. The Department's approach to addressing PFAS includes developing an understanding of PFAS uses; safeguarding health of employees at DOE sites, the public and the environment; using DOE National Laboratories and other partners to develop solutions to challenges PFAS cause; and engaging with regulators, Tribes, stakeholders, and the public as we progress.



DOE's approach to addressing PFAS is detailed in the ***PFAS Strategic Roadmap: DOE Commitments to Action 2022-2025***

### PFAS Strategic Roadmap: DOE Commitments to Action 2022-2025



### Initial Assessment of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances at Department of Energy Sites



In November 2022, DOE released the ***Initial Assessment of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances at Department of Energy Sites***

The report summarizes DOE's knowledge to date of known historical or current PFAS uses, PFAS detections in drinking water and the environment, and regulatory and stakeholder interactions at DOE program sites. The initial assessment will be used to inform next steps in addressing PFAS at DOE sites and to support further coordination with other federal agencies on PFAS solutions. DOE HQ is supporting its sites by providing information on PFAS disposal, records searches, and environmental sampling.

*DOE is committed to collaboration and will continue to engage with federal and state regulators, local communities, and interested Tribes regarding its activities related to PFAS at its sites.*

For more information, visit <https://www.energy.gov/pfas>



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