

PFAS Exposure Assessment Airway Heights, Spokane County, WA

INFORMATION TO PROTECT OUR COMMUNITIES



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) will conduct exposure assessments in communities near current or former military bases and that are known to have had per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in their drinking water. One of those communities is the area of Spokane County near Fairchild Air Force Base. The primary goal of the exposure assessment is to provide information to community members served by the Airway Heights public drinking water supply system about levels of PFAS in their bodies.

CDC/ATSDR will measure the levels of PFAS in blood and urine in the exposed population in Airway Heights and compare them to PFAS levels to the general U.S. population. This information may also be used to help inform future studies evaluating the impact of PFAS exposure on human health.

The exposure assessments will provide information to communities about the levels of PFAS in their bodies.

Background on PFAS in Spokane County

Fairchild Air Force Base used aqueous film-forming foam containing PFAS for firefighting training in the past. The foam was also used to extinguish fires from aircraft crashes at two sites near the Base. Groundwater sources for the city of Airway Heights's drinking water supply system were contaminated with PFAS.

PFAS were first detected in the Airway Heights water system during sampling by the Air Force in May 2017. Water from three wells had PFAS concentrations higher than the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) health advisory level (HA). The HA is 70 parts per trillion (ppt) for two PFAS (PFOS and PFOA), individually or combined.

Immediately after PFAS were detected, the City of Airway Heights alerted customers and took actions to ensure the quality of the drinking water. These actions included removing the contaminated drinking water supply wells from service, flushing the water lines, placing temporary restrictions on use of water for drinking and cooking, and distributing bottled water to residents. The City also secured an alternate source of uncontaminated drinking water through interconnections with the City of Spokane. In June 2017, the City declared the water safe to drink. The

water in Airway Heights' system primarily comes from the City of Spokane. In 2018, the city of Airway Heights installed granular activated carbon (GAC) treatment on one of its wells. This well is only used to meet peak demands during summer months. *(See timeline on the next page).*



Health Advisories for Levels of PFAS in Drinking Water

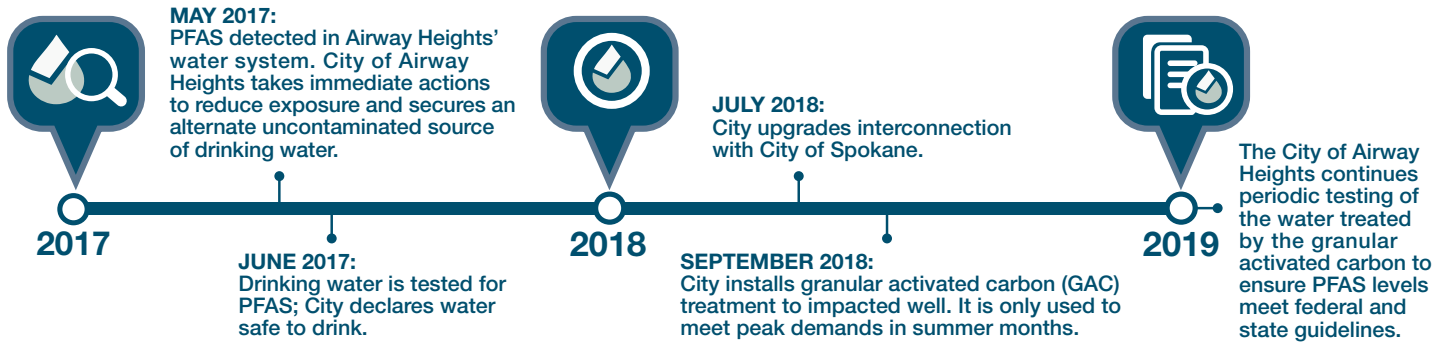
In 2016, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a health advisory for two PFAS — perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) — individually or combined, of 70 parts per trillion (ppt).


Schedule for Exposure Assessment

CDC and ATSDR will begin an exposure assessment in Airway Heights in fall 2019. Recruitment of participants will take approximately six weeks. After that, ATSDR will be in Airway Heights for two weeks to test participants. ATSDR expects to be in the area from November 4th through the 18th, 2019. Individual results will be mailed to participants. This could take several months. CDC laboratories will perform the exposure assessment analysis according to very specific guidelines established




National Center
for Environmental Health
Agency for Toxic Substances
and Disease Registry



 **Analyzing blood samples for PFAS takes considerably longer than routine blood testing you may get through a doctor's office.**


by CDC. We will also write a final report summarizing the findings and recommendations for your community and present the results at a public meeting.

Recruitment

 **Selected households will receive a letter explaining the registration process. If we are unable to reach you by phone, we may try to contact you in person to invite you to participate.**

Participating in an exposure assessment will help you and your community better understand the extent of environmental exposures to PFAS. A random selection of households impacted by PFAS in their drinking water will be identified. Though not everyone exposed to PFAS through drinking water in the community will have the opportunity to participate, by including a random selection of households the results will help estimate exposure for all community members who meet eligibility criteria, even those that were not tested. This information will be used to determine whether community members exposed to PFAS via drinking water have higher levels of PFAS in their bodies than the general U.S. population.

If your household is selected to participate, you will receive a letter in the mail from CDC/ATSDR explaining the exposure assessment and registration process. You

 **If you receive a letter from CDC/ATSDR about the exposure assessment, please contact us at the phone number provided.**

will also get a phone call from a representative who can answer questions and register you and other members of your household interested in participating. If CDC/ATSDR is unable to reach you by phone, we may try to contact you in person to invite you to participate. Household members are eligible if:

- are 3 years of age or older
- do not have a bleeding disorder and are not anemic
- and have lived in the recruitment area for one full year prior to June 8, 2017. Inclusion of children in the exposure assessment is dependent on parent or legal guardian consent.

If you choose to participate, a representative will help you set up an appointment time. You will be asked to give a blood sample and urine sample and fill out a questionnaire asking you some general questions about yourself, your health, and your possible exposure to PFAS through water, food, and your environment.

For More Information

CDC/ATSDR PFAS Exposure Assessments:

For information on work being done in Spokane, and detailed information on the exposure assessments, visit: www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas. Or contact: CAPT Arthur Wendel, MD, MPH/Regional Liaison, 206-553-0454, awendel@cdc.gov.

City of Airway Heights Water:

For information about Airway Heights water, visit: <http://www.cawh.org/departments/public-works>.

Spokane Regional Health District:

For information about public health and environmental protection in Spokane, visit: <https://srhd.org>, (509) 324-1560 ext. 3.

Washington State Department of Health:

For information about public health and environmental protection in Washington, visit: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/>.