

# EPA to Roll Back Drinking Water Protections

*In a reversal of progress, EPA's announcement puts the health of millions at risk and favors polluters over people*

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, May 15, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, the Environmental Protection Agency [announced plans](#) to roll back

critical drinking water standards for certain PFAS "forever" chemicals, reversing national protections [put in place just last year](#) to limit contamination from these toxic chemicals. EPA will rescind and reconsider maximum contamination limits (MCLs) for PFHxS, PFNA, HFPO-DA (commonly known as GenX), and PFBS, and will delay implementation of standards for PFOA and PFOS.



“

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*Sarah Doll, national director  
of Safer States*

In April 2024, EPA finalized drinking water standards for six individual PFAS, marking the first time the federal government set enforceable limits for these chemicals in public water systems. That action aimed to reduce exposure to PFAS, which are linked to serious health problems, including cancer and harm to the immune system, and are known to build up in our bodies and the environment.

Safer States and Toxic-Free Future are calling on the EPA to follow through on its commitment to ensure safe drinking water for all communities. Rolling back these standards

allows continued exposure to PFAS through contaminated tap water, putting the health of millions of Americans at risk.

[The following statements](#) were released in response to this news:

“This decision undermines the efforts of families, firefighters, farmers, and state leaders who have been urgently calling for safer drinking water,” said Sarah Doll, national director of Safer States. “Rolling back protections and ignoring the science won't make the contamination go away—it only ensures that more people will be exposed to toxic PFAS, while states are left to

manage the fallout. States will continue to lead in confronting the PFAS crisis, but this action deals a serious blow to communities without their own drinking water standards, leaving them even more vulnerable.”

“This rollback of standards for PFAS chemicals that contaminate drinking water across the U.S. leaves families and communities exposed every time they turn on the tap,” said Liz Hitchcock, federal policy program director for Toxic-Free Future. “Just four years ago, as a member of Congress, Administrator Zeldin supported the PFAS Action Act, recognizing the urgent need to reduce these harmful exposures. EPA’s announcement today is a dangerous reversal—one that our families and communities will pay for with our health and tax dollars.”

## BACKGROUND ON PFAS CHEMICALS

Chemical companies sell PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) for application to products such as paper and textiles as stain-resistant, water-repellent, and grease-proofing treatments. These toxic compounds are also widely used in industrial processes and then discharged into waterways. PFAS have been linked to serious health problems such as cancer, immune system suppression, increased cholesterol levels, pregnancy-induced hypertension, liver damage, reduced fertility, and increased risk of thyroid disease. PFAS has been found in breast milk and in most products labeled stain- and water-resistant. PFAS are known as “forever” chemicals because they persist and do not break down in the environment. Research has found that 3M knew in the 1970s that PFOA and PFOS are dangerous.

**PFAS in drinking water:** State governments are taking legislative and regulatory actions to establish enforceable standards such as Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) for certain PFAS in drinking water. Eleven states (ME, MA, MI, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, WA, and WI) have established enforceable standards. Maine has an interim standard that is in effect and enforceable while they go through rule-making to establish final PFAS MCLs. At least 16 states (AK, CA, CO, CT, HI, IL, IN, MD, MN, MS, MT, NM, NC, OH, OR, and WI) have adopted guidance, health advisory, or notification levels for certain PFAS chemicals.

## SAFER STATES

Safer States is a national alliance of environmental health organizations and coalitions from across the nation working to safeguard people and the planet from toxic chemicals, and to ensure availability of safer solutions for a healthier world. Led by state-based organizations, the alliance seeks government and corporate action that lead to safer chemicals and materials, and protection of public health and communities by transitioning away from harmful chemicals and holding chemical polluters accountable. [www.saferstates.org](http://www.saferstates.org)

## TOXIC-FREE FUTURE

Toxic-Free Future is a national leader in environmental health research and advocacy. Through the power of science, education, and activism, Toxic-Free Future drives strong laws and corporate responsibility that protects the health of all people and the planet. [www.toxicfreefuture.org](http://www.toxicfreefuture.org)

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