

1. What is the Inland Empire Water Partnership?

The Inland Empire Water Partnership is a collaborative effort of the Eastern Municipal Water District, Inland Empire Utilities Agency, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District and the Western Municipal Water District. These agencies are taking a regional approach to increase awareness of water quality issues in the Inland Empire and to advocate for science-driven solutions.

2. What are PFAS?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a complex family of more than 3,000 manufactured chemicals, including perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), which are the best understood of the PFAS chemicals.

3. Where do PFAS come from?

These chemicals were manufactured and used for decades in consumer products because of their heat and water-resistant properties. They are present in everyday items, such as clothing and cookware, and have ultimately made their way into water supplies across the nation.

4. Where is PFAS found?

PFAS are found in a variety of consumer products, such as nonstick cookware, clothing, makeup and food packaging. They have also found their way into food and water supplies. Food may contain PFAS if it was grown in soil containing PFAS or if it was processed using equipment containing PFAS. Water supplies may also contain levels of PFAS if they were exposed to it from a nearby facility using PFAS.

5. What are the health impacts of PFAS?

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA), exposure to PFAS can lead to adverse health effects in humans. However, the details surrounding the nature of these health effects and the levels of PFAS necessary to trigger the

effects are unknown. Scientists are still working to understand these health effects.

6. Am I at risk of consuming water contaminated with PFAS?

To find out if any water supplies in your region have been removed from service due to PFAS levels, please visit the following website: https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/map/pfas_map.

7. Are there laws regulating this compound in water? Are laws different from state-to-state?

The US EPA has initiated the steps to evaluate the need for Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) of PFAS under the Safe Drinking Water Act. While this research on PFAS is underway, the US EPA has issued a health advisory for PFOA and PFOS, providing guidance for each state to create their own PFAS regulations. California's PFAS regulations are some of the most stringent in the nation, but regulations vary state-to-state.

8. Who regulates drinking water in California?

The California State Division of Drinking Water (DDW) regulates drinking water in California and they have already established standards for water agencies to follow, including a Notification and a Response Level. The Notification Level, set at 5.1 parts per trillion (ppt) for PFOA and 6.5 ppt for PFOS, requires water agencies to notify their government officials if those levels are exceeded. The Response Level, set at 10 ppt for PFOA and 40 ppt for PFOS, calls on water agencies to act, either by removing the well from service or treating the water sufficiently to reduce its levels to below the Response Level.

Department of Drinking Water Notification and Response Levels as of March 2021

	Levels	Action Taken by Water Agencies
Notification Level	5.1 ppt for PFOA 6.5 ppt for PFOS	Requires water agencies to notify their local governing bodies
Response Level	10 ppt for PFOA 40 ppt for PFOS	Calls on water agencies to take action either by removing affected wells from service or treating or diluting the water sufficiently to reduce its PFAS levels

**Parts per trillion, or ppt, is equal to a single drop of water in 20 Olympic-sized swimming pools.*

9. What is a Part per Trillion (ppt)?

It is a microscopic measurement for something in the water and is equal to one single drop of water in 20 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

10. Are water agencies taking action to remove PFAS?

Water agencies are actively monitoring their groundwater wells to ensure all drinking water supplies are safe. If any water supplies reach 10 ppt of PFOA or 40 ppt of PFOS, they will remove the well from service to ensure the water does not reach your homes and/or may treat or dilute the water sufficiently to reduce its levels to below the Response Level.

11. How are PFAS removed from water?

There are multiple options when it comes to removing PFAS from a water supply. Water agencies can blend a water supply containing PFAS with another clean water supply until the PFAS level has decreased to below the Response Level. Water agencies may also opt into other technologies for treatment, including activated carbon treatment, ion exchange resins, and high-pressure membranes such as nanofiltration or reverse osmosis.

12. Will removing this compound impact my water bill?

Depending on levels identified, there could be either immediate or long-term costs to customers. At this time, we have not identified anything that would cause your bill to increase.

13. Why is the Inland Empire Clean Water Partnership taking a regional approach to this issue?

The Partnership was formed to provide a reputable information hub on PFAS in the Inland Empire. Working together and speaking as one voice will allow us to share information and updates more broadly and avoid any misinformation.

14. How can I follow along with this topic?

Please visit your local water agency's website to follow along with PFAS-related news.

15. Where can I get more information on PFAS?

Please visit the following websites for more information on PFAS:

- **US EPA:** <https://www.epa.gov/pfas>
- **California State Division of Drinking Water:** https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/PFOA_PFOS.html
- **US FDA:** <https://www.fda.gov/food/chemicals-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>