

Who is ASDWA: The Association of State Drinking Water Administrators (ASDWA) represents the drinking water program administrators in the 50 states, the five territories, the Navajo Nation, and the District of Columbia. ASDWA’s members regulate and provide technical assistance and funding for the nation’s 160,000 public water systems, and coordinate with multiple partners to ensure safe drinking water. ASDWA works with its PFAS workgroup (comprised of drinking water program representatives from 27 states across the country) and other partners to discuss ASDWA member needs and challenges for assessing and addressing PFAS in drinking water.

PFAS Background: The understanding of potential drinking water impacts from PFAS has significantly increased over the past decade. This class of chemicals started to get publicity in 2001-2002 due to water contamination from the Washington Works Plant in West Virginia. In 2006, DuPont and other manufacturers agreed to principally phase out production of PFOA and PFOS.

Third Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR3): Six PFAS compounds were included in EPA’s final UCMR3. UCMR3 monitoring occurred between January 2013 and December 2015 and included two to four quarterly samples at mostly large water systems throughout the country. The table here includes information on EPA actions related to seven PFAS compounds, including the PFAS on UCMR3.

Name	UCMR3	2009 EPA HAS (for UCMR3)	2016 Revised HAS	2019 EPA Action Plan
PFOA	Perfluorooctanoic acid	400 ppt	70 ppt (individual and combined sum of PFOA and PFOS)	EPA committed to making regulatory determinations
PFOS	Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid	200 ppt		
PFNA	Perfluoronanoic acid	On UCMR3, No EPA HAS	No EPA HAS	EPA committed to developing toxicity assessments
PFHxS	Perfluorohexanesulfonic acid			
PFHpA	Perfluoroheptanoic acid			
PFBS	Perfluorobutanesulfonic acid	No actions	No EPA HAS, EPA developed draft toxicity assessments for PFBS and GenX in 2018, to be finalized in 2019	
GenX	Hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid (NOT on UCMR3)			

EPA’s 2009 Provisional and 2016 Revised Health Advisories (HAs): In 2009, EPA established provisional health advisories (HAs) for PFOA at 400 parts per trillion (ppt) and for PFOS at 200 ppt; those two numbers were the benchmark at that time, even though an EPA health effects review was underway. Based on the provisional health advisories, national occurrence in UCMR3 for PFOA and PFOS, at the time appeared to be relatively low. In May 2016, EPA released revised HAs for the sum of PFOA and PFOS at 70 ppt. This numerical reduction significantly increased the number of water systems impacted.

2019 EPA PFAS Action Plan: Commitments by EPA in the action plan included: making a regulatory determination for PFOA and PFOS; determining if a SDWA regulation is appropriate for a broader class of PFAS; including a larger group of PFAS in UCMR5; working through its regulatory development process for listing PFOA and PFOS as CERCLA hazardous substances; continuing to use its authority under TSCA to review new PFAS and issuing supplemental proposed Significant New Use Rules on PFAS; and developing new tools to characterize PFAS in the environment and materials to communicate about PFAS.

More PFAS Contamination Sites are Being Found: The number of PFAS contaminated sites continues to grow. Over the past decade, PFAS contamination was found in many more locations than where the UCMR3 required water systems to conduct monitoring. Initially, contamination was thought to be somewhat limited to the chemical manufacturing facilities but has now expanded to include military bases, fire-fighting foam

application, storage, and disposal sites, manufacturing sites of fire-retardant materials, landfills, and many other locations, including some that appear to be caused by air deposition.

The Number of PFAS Being Manufactured Continues to Grow: Since the phase-out of PFOA and PFOS, companies have shifted to “short-chain” PFAS such as GenX and ADONA, which are now creating a host of data collection and analysis issues, as regulators and researchers are struggling to obtain enough robust health effects, analytical methods, and treatment data to make smart decisions.

[ASDWA’s PFAS Lab Testing Primer \(Version 2\)](#) provides guidance and an overview of options and issues for state drinking water programs that are associated with testing for PFAS in water samples collected from public water systems. The primer was updated to include EPA’s Method 537.1 published in November 2018 that now includes GenX, hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid (HFPO-DA), 4,8-dioxa-3H-perfluorononanoic acid (ADONA), and three other PFAS compounds. The method can now test for 18 PFAS in drinking water.

[ASDWA Submitted Comments](#) on [EPA’s Draft Toxicity Assessments for GenX and PFBS](#) in January 2019 summarizing state and water system challenges with EPA issuing HAs and toxicity assessments versus Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) regulations with established Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) including:

- EPA toxicity values and HAs create “de-facto” MCLs.
- State drinking water programs are having to divert attention and resources from core programs.
- Without preliminary guidance, states and water systems can’t prepare in advance for high PFAS levels.
- Without a federal regulation, the Department of Defense (DoD) will not address cleanup of PFAS.

State Regulatory and Oversight Challenges: States are having to make tough decisions about whether or how to implement Toxicity Assessments and HAs and address PFAS in drinking water without federal standards. The table here shows the states that have proposed or established PFAS standards or guidelines that are lower or different than EPA’s HAs. These numbers show the variation in health risk goals and risk reductions among states and are creating public confusion about what levels of PFAS are safe in drinking water.

State	Drinking Water Action	Compound	Level (ppt)
California	Notification Levels	PFOA	14
		PFOS	13
Connecticut	Action Level	Sum of PFOA, PFOS, PFNA, PFHxS, PFHpA	70
Minnesota	Health Based Guidance for Water	PFOA	35
		PFOS	15
		PFHxS	47
New Hampshire	Rulemaking Initiated 12/31/18	PFOA	38
		PFOS	70
		Sum of PFOA and PFOS	70
		PFHxS	85
New Jersey	Adopted Regulation Regulation in Development Guidance Value	PFNA	13
		PFOA	14
		PFOS	13
North Carolina	Health Advisory	GenX	140
Vermont	Drinking Water Health Advisory	Sum of PFOA, PFOS, PFNA, PFHxS, PFHpA	20

Previous Congressional testimony and ASDWA letters to EPA included recommendations to:

develop unified federal risk messaging; directly engage with states and stakeholders; conduct more research; increase funding and support; develop rules or guidance for other PFAS; and address lab and sampling needs.

For more information about ASDWA and state activities, visit the ASDWA website or contact Deirdre Mason of ASDWA at dmason@asdwa.org or 703-812-4775.