PFAS Results Reporting and Notification
For Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI)
Outlying Landing Field (OLF) Coupeville

What are per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances and where do they come from?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of thousands of man-made chemicals. PFAS have been used in a variety of industrial and consumer products around the globe, including in the U.S., for decades. Due to their widespread use and environmental persistence, most people in the United States have been exposed to certain PFAS. PFAS have been used to make coatings and products that are used as oil and water repellents for carpets, clothing, paper packaging for food, and cookware. They are also contained in some foams (aqueous film-forming foam or AFFF) used for fighting petroleum fires.

Is there a federal or Washington State regulation for PFAS in drinking water?

There is currently no federal drinking water standard for any PFAS compounds. In May 2016, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established a lifetime drinking water health advisory (HA) level at 70 parts per trillion (ppt) for individual or combined concentrations of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS). Both chemicals are types of PFAS.

In Washington, there is a PFAS drinking water regulation. The Department of Defense (DoD) must follow these state standards where we supply the drinking water. The State drinking water regulation sets action levels in drinking water for the following PFAS:

Washington State Action Levels	
Specific PFAS Contaminant	State Action Level (parts per trillion)
PFOA	10
PFOS	15
PFNA	9
PFHxS	65
PFBS	345

The Department of Defense (DoD) issued a policy in 2023 to monitor drinking water for PFAS at all DoD owned and operated water systems at a minimum of every two years. This policy states that where State regulations for PFAS are more stringent than the guidance provided in the memorandum, the more stringent regulations apply. That is, if water sampling results confirm levels of PFAS compounds (including PFOS or PFOA) in drinking water above the State standard, water systems would 1) take immediate action to reduce exposure to PFOS or PFOA by providing alternative drinking water; and 2) evaluate and implement corrective actions to reduce levels below the State Action Level, or determine if the system should be permanently removed from use.

What about the EPA's 2022 interim Health Advisories or proposed regulations?

EPA issued interim Health Advisories for PFOS and PFOA in 2022. However, these newer levels are below quantifiable limits (i.e., below detection levels). In March 2023, EPA announced a proposed National Primary Drinking Water Regulation (NPDWR) for six PFAS including PFOA, PFOS, PFNA, HFPO-DA (GenX Chemicals), PFHxS, and PFBS. The EPA anticipates finalizing the regulation after the public comment period in 2023 and water systems will have three years to comply with the new regulation.

In anticipation of this EPA drinking water regulation and to account for emerging science that shows potential health effects of PFOS and PFOA at levels lower than 70 ppt, DoD continues to evaluate its efforts to address PFAS in drinking water, and what actions we can take to be prepared to incorporate this standard, such as reviewing our current data and collecting additional sampling where necessary. DoD remains committed to communicating and engaging with our communities throughout this process.

Has Naval Air Station Whidbey Island OLF Coupeville tested its water for PFAS?
Yes. NASWI OLF Coupeville has previously tested for PFAS in August of 2023. Most recently, samples were collected from Building 2807 and Building 11 in November of 2023.

For Building 11, we are pleased to report that drinking water testing results were below the Minimum Reporting Level (MRL) for all 29[1] PFAS compounds covered by the sampling method, including PFOA and PFOS.

For Building 2807, PFOA tested higher than the 2016 EPA HA on November 29, 2023. The results of all PFAS sampled are provided in the tables below. The 2016 EPA HA is the concentration above which action will be taken to reduce exposure to PFOA and PFOS, which may include installation of additional treatment. In accordance with the DoD policy, alternative water will be provided for drinking, cooking, and oral hygiene until the drinking water consistently tests below the State Action Level. NASWI is sampling semi-annually to monitor the situation, and periodic updates will continue to be provided on the installation website.

Detected PFAS Compounds – NASWI OLF B2807 EPA Method 537.1		
PFBS	329	ng/L
PFHxA	845	ng/L
PFHpA	122	ng/L
PFHxS	336	ng/L
PFOA	308	ng/L
PFOS	1.31	ng/L

Detected PFAS Compounds - NASWI OLF B2807 EPA Method 533		
PFBA	153	ng/L
PFPeA	422	ng/L
PFBS	272	ng/L
PFMBA	0.770	ng/L
PFHxA	609	ng/L
PFPeS	157	ng/L
PFHpA	100	ng/L
PFHxS	290	ng/L
PFOA	243	ng/L
PFOS	1.08	ng/L

ng/L: nanograms per liter, equivalent to parts per trillion

1 – All PFAS analytes required to be sampled for under DoD Policy and the fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR5).