Guam PFAS Fact Sheet

Find more information at oagguam.org/pfas

What is PFAS?

Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances **(PFAS)** is a chemical that causes damage to our health and the environment. PFAS is a category of chemical compounds, including, but not limited to:
*Perfluorooctanyl Sulfate **(PFOS)**; and
*Perfluorooctanoic Acid **(PFOA).**

Characteristics of PFAS:

Mobile: Once introduced into the environment, it quickly spreads because it easily dissolves in water.

Persistent: Because of their multiple florine-carbon bonds, it does not break down naturally.

Bio-accumulate and bio-magnify: Very slowly removed from the body, builds up over time.

What is a Health Advisory Level (HAL)?

According to the US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA), it is the amount of drinking water contamination, which if exceeded, may result in adverse health effects.

What are the long term effects of PFAS?

- Kidney cancer
- Testicular cancer
- High cholesterol
- Decrease in antibody response to vaccines
- Liver damage
- Pregnancy induced hypertension and preeclampsia
- Thyroid disease

Why did OAG file the lawsuit?

To make AFFF designers, manufacturers, marketers and sellers pay for the damage done to Guam's environment. The OAG is seeking to have the defendants pay the cost of investigating, testing, monitoring and cleaning up AFFF chemicals on the island.

1940

1940s
3M produced PFOS and PFOA by electrochemical fluorination

1960s
3M used that process to develop Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) which puts out liquid fires

1963
3M knew that PFAS products did not naturally break down.

1960
U.S. Department of Defense purchased AFFF exclusively from 3M and Tyco/Ansul

1975
3M found universal presence of PFOA in samples collected from people across the U.S.

2000

2001

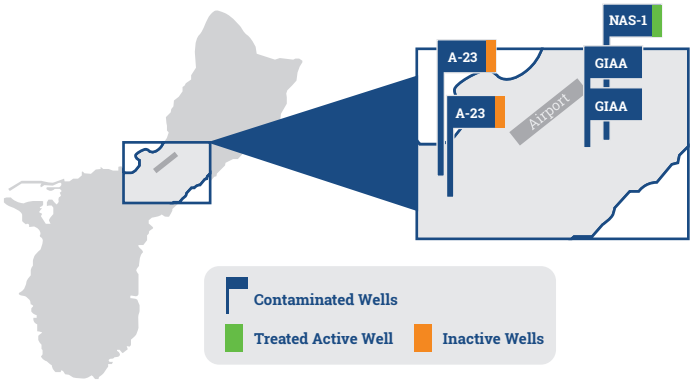
2009
US EPA sets temporary provisional drinking water HAL for PFAS at 200 ng/L

2016
US EPA sets lifetime HAL for PFAS at 70 ng/L

2019

July 2019
35th Guam legislature passes Protehi I Hanom Act authorizing OAG to hire expert legal counsel for PFAS Contamination; Governor Lou Leon Guerrero signs it into law

Sept. 2019
OAG files lawsuit locally against PFAS designers, manufactures, marketers and sellers

Is PFAS on Guam?

GWA has not detected PFOA or PFOS in Guam's drinking water. However, here are the wells known to have tested above the HAL: