

According to the Boston Globe, the town of Ayer, like many towns located near military bases, has discovered that town wells near Fort Devens tested positive for the toxic substances like PFAS, some significantly in excess of what public health officials consider safe. The EPA has never required public water departments to test for PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances). The EPA is now developing guidelines on upper limits for PFAS and may require testing in the future.

Is Lincoln's water likely to be contaminated with PFAS?

Lincoln's water is highly unlikely to be contaminated with PFAS. In 2016 the EPA required several neighboring towns to test for PFAS as part of a random sampling program. Lexington, Waltham, Wayland, Concord, and Sudbury all tested negative. Moreover, Lincoln has carefully controlled the watershed that supplies water to Flint's Pond and the Tower Road Well, currently our only two active water sources. Our watersheds are far from any military bases or industrial activities.

Does the Lincoln Water Department Test for PFAS

<http://www.lincolntown.org/DocumentCenter/View/58637/PFAS-Test-Results-March-2019>

The regulations are under review by both the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The DEP regulations for PFAS will go into effect some time in 2020. The Water Department will immediately test the water according to any new requirements as they are instituted.

What are PFAS anyway?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of man-made chemicals that includes PFOA, PFOS, GenX, and many other chemicals. PFAS have been manufactured and used in a variety of industries around the globe, including in the United States since the 1940s. PFOA and PFOS have been the most extensively produced and studied of these chemicals. Both chemicals are very persistent in the environment and in the human body – meaning they don't break down and they can accumulate over time. There is evidence that exposure to PFAS can lead to adverse human health effects. PFAS can be found in:

- Food packaged in PFAS-containing materials, processed with equipment that used PFAS, or grown in PFAS-contaminated soil or water.
- Commercial household products, including stain- and water-repellent fabrics, nonstick products (e.g., Teflon), polishes, waxes, paints, cleaning products, and fire-fighting foams (a major source of groundwater contamination at airports and military bases where firefighting training occurs).
- Workplace, including production facilities or industries (e.g., chrome plating, electronics manufacturing or oil recovery) that use PFAS.
- Drinking water typically localized and associated with a specific facility (e.g., manufacturer, landfill, wastewater treatment plant, firefighter training facility).

PFAS and the Lincoln Water Supply

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- Living organisms, including fish, animals and humans, where PFAS have the ability to build up and persist over time.