

Perfluorinated Chemicals in the Environment: September 6th U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Environment Hearing



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The Subcommittee on Environment of the United States (“Subcommittee”) of the United States House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee held a hearing on September 6th titled:

“Perfluorinated Chemicals in the Environment: An Update on the Response to Contamination and Challenges Presented.”

A background Memorandum by the Majority staff of the Subcommittee identifies the substances that are the subject of the hearing as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and states they constitute:

A large group of man-made chemicals that include perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), and GenX chemicals.

PFAS properties include resistance to heat, water, and oil. Further, they have been described as persistent in the environment and resist degradation. The compounds have been used in various industrial applications and consumer products such as:

- Fabrics for furniture
- Paper packaging for food and other materials resistant to water, grease or stains
- Firefighting at airfields
- Utilization in several industrial processes

The Memorandum discusses potential human exposure to PFAS through drinking water, air or food and the pathways through which they have entered the environment.

The document also discusses:

- State of PFAS contamination
- Governmental responses to PFAS in the environment

Subcommittee staff states that potential areas of discussion include:

- What are the technical and economic barriers that communities face responding to PFAS contamination?
- What should the public know about the risks and the best way to prevent unhealthy exposures?

- Are the parties responsible for contamination meaningfully addressing the cleanup of the contamination caused and any damage to local water systems?
- What is the status of EPA's plans regarding PFAS that were announced by the Agency on May 22, 2018?

Witnesses scheduled to testify at the hearing include:

- Dr. Peter Grevatt, Director, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Ms. Maureen Sullivan, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Environment, U.S. Department of Defense
- Mr. Sandeep Burman, Manager, Site Remediation and Redevelopment, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, on behalf of Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials
- Ms. Lisa Daniels, Director, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, on behalf of Association of State Drinking Water Administrators
- Ms. Emily Donovan, Co-Founder, Clean Cape Fear
- Ms. Carol Isaacs, Director, Michigan PFAS Action Response Team
- Mr. Erik D. Olson, Senior Director, Health and Food, Healthy People and Thriving Communities Program, Natural Resources Defense Counsel

A copy of the Memorandum can be downloaded [below](#).

A link to the scheduled witnesses prepared testimony can be found [here](#).