

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Camp Schwab Detectable Levels of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

The health and well-being of our service members, their families, and civilian employees remains a high priority for us. Marine Corps Base (MCB) Camp Butler Environmental Affairs Branch (EAB) routinely monitors for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Department of Defense (DoD) policy requires testing for Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) in all DoD-owned drinking water systems, and notification to the public if any PFAS are detected. Camp Schwab's water system is not a DoD-owned drinking water system, as the water purveyor is Nago City Henoko Water Treatment Plant, but EAB is conducting sampling on a quarterly basis for all MCB Camp Butler and MCAS Futenma, for both DoD-owned and non-DoD-owned systems.

Per the Japan Environmental Governing Standards (JEGS), the regulatory policy governing drinking water at United States military installations in Japan, there is no maximum contaminant level established for any PFAS. DoD policy requires us to take action if the concentrations of Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) exceed 70 parts per trillion (ppt), individually or combined.

Table 1: Camp Schwab PFAS Results

PFAS Analyte	Abbreviation	DoD Action Level (ppt)	29 Nov. 2023 (ppt)	28 Feb. 2024 (ppt)	8 Apr. 2024 (ppt)
Perfluorooctanoic acid	PFOA	70	ND	ND	ND
Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid	PFOS	70	ND	ND	ND
PFOA + PFOS		70	0 (calculated)	0 (calculated)	0 (calculated)
Perfluorobutanoic acid	PFBA	None	-	ND	1.9

ND = non-detect

What are Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and where do they come from?

PFAS are a group of thousands of man-made chemicals that have been used in a variety of industrial and consumer products around the world for decades. Due to their widespread use and environmental persistence, most people have been exposed to certain PFAS. They have been used to make coatings and products that are used as oil and water repellents in carpets, clothing, paper packaging for food, and cookware. They are also contained in some aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF) used for fighting petroleum fires at airfields and for industrial fire suppression.

What does this mean?

Research is still ongoing to understand the mechanisms of PFAS toxicity. The risk of health effects associated with PFAS depends on exposure factors (dose, frequency, route, duration), individual factors (sensitivity and chronic disease burden), and other determinants of health. The epidemiological evidence suggests associations between increases in exposure to specific PFAS and certain health effects. For specific information about the health effects of PFAS exposure, please visit <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/>.

Are there regulations for PFAS in drinking water?

On April 10, 2024, the EPA announced a final rule on drinking water standards for certain PFAS under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The rule applies to all regulated drinking water purveyors, including Department of Defense (DoD). The rule establishes maximum contaminant levels (MCL) for several PFAS in drinking water, sets forth requirements to establish monitoring and notification requirements within three years, and provides five years for regulated drinking water purveyors to comply with the specified MCL levels. We are working to protect the drinking water on our installation and ensure compliance with EPA standards in advance of the deadline. This standard is expected to be adopted into the JEGS.

What is being done?

MCB Camp Butler, EAB will continue to monitor for PFAS at MCB Camp Butler and MCAS Futenma and take appropriate action, as required. Additionally, MCB Camp Butler in coordination with Marine Corps Installations Command and joint service partners will continue to evaluate the potential need for mitigation measures, as necessary. MCB Camp Butler will post sampling results of detected PFAS on the installation's public webpage and in the drinking water system's Consumer Confidence Reports accessible at <https://www.mcipac.marines.mil/News-Center/Consumer-Confidence-Reports/>. These efforts and required DoD timelines are in advance of EPA requirements noted in their recent regulations.

What can I do?

There is nothing you need to do, as there is no immediate risk to the general population. You may continue to use the water for all consumptive purposes (drinking, bathing, showering, cooking, dishwashing, and maintaining oral hygiene).

For more information, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/pfas-explained>, or send inquiries to EAB Drinking Water Program Manager at mcbb.gf.envwater@usmc.mil, or call 098-970-5197.

This notice is being sent to you by MCB Camp Butler Environmental Affairs Branch.

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