

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Camp Lester, South, 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. 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 establishes maximum contaminant levels (MCL) for several PFAS in drinking water, provides three years for regulated drinking water systems to begin monitoring and related public notifications, and five years for purveyors to install system improvements to comply with the new MCL levels. As a proactive approach and in anticipation of EPA's requirements, a Department of Defense (DoD) policy was issued on 11 July 2023 that required testing of all DoD-owned drinking water systems for PFAS by 31 December 2023. Initial samples from the Camp Lester Water Treatment Plant (WTP) Finished Water Reservoir were collected on 13 December 2023 and results were received on 13 February 2024. Testing will continue on a quarterly basis, and Table 1 below will be updated with any detected PFAS analytes and will show results for the most recent four quarters. Lester WTP provides drinking water to residents and occupants located in Southern Camp Lester (Old Lester Housing, Lester Middle School, and additional facilities – see Figure 1).

Per the Japan Environmental Governing Standards (JEGS), the regulatory policy governing drinking water at United States military installations in Japan, there is no MCL established for PFAS. In accordance with the 11 July 2023 DoD policy mentioned above, we are required to monitor drinking water for PFAS at a minimum of every two years and to notify the public of detectable PFAS in the drinking water supplied by DoD-owned drinking water systems. DoD policy also requires us to take action to provide alternative drinking water if the concentrations of Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) exceed 70 parts per trillion (ppt) (also expressed as nanograms per liter [ng/L]), individually or combined. The sample results are below these levels.

Table 1: Camp Lester WTP Finished Water Reservoir PFAS Results (Most Recent Four Quarters).

PFAS Analyte	Abbreviation	DoD Action Level (ppt)	13 Dec. 2023 (ppt)	6 Mar. 2024 (ppt)	7 May 2024 (ppt)	26 Sep. 2024 (ppt)
Perfluorooctanoic acid	PFOA	70	6.5	6.1	4.4	5.8
Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid	PFOS	70	18	16	12	16
PFOA + PFOS		70	25 (calculated)	22 (calculated)	16 (calculated)	22 (calculated)
Perfluorobutanesulfonic acid	PFBS	None	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.1
Perfluorobutanoic acid	PFBA		3.9	3.3	3.3	3.4
Perfluorohexanesulfonic acid	PFHxS		15	11	9.7	13
Perfluoroheptanoic acid	PFHpA		ND	ND	ND	1.8
Perfluorohexanoic acid	PFHxA		3.7	3.6	3.0	3.0
Perfluoropentanoic acid	PFPeA		2.7	2.6	2.2	2.4

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?

As noted above, 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 in the treated drinking water for Camp Lester, South on a periodic basis as directed by DoD policy 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.

Date distributed: 1 NOV 2024

Figure 1: Buildings served by Camp Lester WTP

