



Your  
safe drinking  
water

# FAQs

## Perfluorinated Compounds (PFCs)

Information regarding trace amounts of perfluorinated compounds (PFCs) in public drinking water systems located in the Security-Widefield-Fountain area.



### What are PFCs?

#### Where do they come from?

PFCs are a family of human-made chemicals that do not occur naturally in the environment. They can be found in firefighting foams, coating additives, surface protection products for carpets and clothing, and in the commercial products Teflon™ and Scotchgard®. While these chemicals are not regulated, out of an abundance of caution, the EPA, state, and local health agencies are working together to understand and address this emerging issue and reduce exposure to PFCs as recommended by EPA.

Currently, the EPA has a provisional health advisory limits for specific PFCs. These limits are under review and may change as soon as April 1, 2016. CDPHE is working with the EPA to get the latest information and will update our website and FAQ document as soon as further information on health limits is released.

#### Where does my water come from?

There are several aquifers that supply this region with drinking water via groundwater wells, including the Windmill Gulch aquifer and the Widefield aquifer. Drinking water sources delivered to your tap can be treated water directly from groundwater wells, water that is blended from multiple wells or with treated river water, or solely from treated water out of a reservoir.

#### Who provides my drinking water?

If you receive a water bill, then you are connected to a public drinking water system such as Security, Widefield or Fountain water districts. If your water bill is included in association dues, contact the manager to determine which system provides your water. Water from Security, Widefield and Fountain water districts meets current health standards in the Colorado Primary Drinking Water Regulations. In addition, these water utilities are taking steps to ensure that drinking water PFC levels are below EPA's current health advisory levels.

If you do not receive a bill, you could be served by a private well. El Paso County Public Health is working with private well owners who want more information about PFCs. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment is working with other small utilities in the Fountain Valley area to collect drinking water samples and test for PFCs.

#### I have a private well. Who do I call to get more information?

El Paso County Public Health, in collaboration with Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, EPA, and El Paso County Assessor are working to identify homes with private wells in the area, and provide information about water testing. A map of the potentially affected area is available at [www.elpasocountyhealth.org](http://www.elpasocountyhealth.org). For additional assistance call 719-575-8602.

If you have questions about your public drinking water, please call:

- **Security Water Sanitation District**  
(719) 392-3475
- **Widefield Water and Sanitation District**  
(719) 390-7111
- **City of Fountain Water Department**  
(719) 322-2010

## What are regulated contaminants?

These are chemicals monitored and regulated by the EPA and CDPHE to ensure safe drinking water. For more information on drinking water standards and regulations for contaminants please visit: [www.epa.gov/dwstandardsregulations](http://www.epa.gov/dwstandardsregulations).

## Why aren't PFCs regulated?

EPA regulates pollutants that occur both at levels of public health concern and in sufficient frequency to warrant national regulation. PFCs are currently being reviewed by the EPA to determine if a national regulation will be passed.

## What are the risks to public health?

Health effects from drinking water containing PFCs depends on many factors including how much of the water you drink, how long you have been drinking the water, and personal factors including age, lifestyle and state of health. Infants may be at higher risk of health effects as they consume more water relative to their body weight.

A large number of human studies have examined possible relationships between levels of PFCs in blood and adverse health effects. It is difficult to interpret results because they have not been consistent; some studies have found an effect and others have not found the same effect. The most consistent health effects in these studies are increased risk of heart disease or high blood pressure. Some specific PFC exposure may also cause liver damage. Studies have shown more limited findings related to low infant birth weights. For health information, please visit the federal public health agency ATSDR site about perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs) and your health (listed below under web resources)

## What else can I do?

If you are concerned about your family's health, you may consider using bottled water or adding a treatment system to your kitchen tap for drinking, food preparation and preparing infant formula for bottle-fed babies. Certain treatment systems are effective in removing PFCs from drinking water. Reverse osmosis (RO) has been shown as a reliable under-the-sink treatment option. These devices can be purchased at local home improvement stores. Bathing with water containing the current level of PFCs is safe.

## More information

If you have questions about exposure to PFCs in general, please contact CDPHE at 303-692-2700 or [cdphe\\_toxcall@state.co.us](mailto:cdphe_toxcall@state.co.us).

## Web resources

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment  
[www.colorado.gov/cdphe/pfcs-drinking-water](http://www.colorado.gov/cdphe/pfcs-drinking-water)

El Paso County Public Health  
[www.elpasocountyhealth.org](http://www.elpasocountyhealth.org)

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)  
[www.epa.gov/wqs-tech](http://www.epa.gov/wqs-tech)

Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry  
[www.atsdr.cdc.gov/Toxfaqs/](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/Toxfaqs/)

Center for Disease Control  
[www.cdc.gov/biomonitoring/PFCs\\_FactSheet.html](http://www.cdc.gov/biomonitoring/PFCs_FactSheet.html)

