



Overview

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a class of man-made chemicals that includes PFOA, PFOS, GenX, and many others. PFAS are used in a variety of consumer products including non-stick cookware, water-repellent clothing, stain-resistant fabrics and carpets, personal care products, firefighting foams, and food packaging. Studies have shown that exposure to PFAS can cause adverse health effects including reproductive, developmental, and organ damage, impacts on the immune system, thyroid disruption, and cancer.

Policy Options

Defining PFAS as a Class

- PFAS chemicals share a common trait, chains of carbon surrounded by fluorine which make it difficult to break down. **Washington** passed [SB 5135](#) (2018) the first law to define PFAS as a class and [22 states](#) now use the definition..

Broad PFAS Policies

- **Maine** [LD 1503](#) (2021) and **Minnesota** [HF 2310](#) (2023) require disclosure of PFAS in all consumer products and ban PFAS in all products unless the use is necessary for public health or the functioning of society and alternatives are currently unavailable.

Food Packaging

- **Washington** [HB 2658](#) (2018) and **Maine** [LD 1433](#) (2019) prohibit the manufacture and sale of food packaging containing PFAS and phthalate chemicals (only in Maine bill). Bills require their Departments of Environment to conduct an assessment on safer alternatives.

Firefighting Foams

- **Maryland** [HB 0275](#) (2022) replaces PFAS-containing firefighting foam with safer alternatives, requires notification for firefighter turnout gear that contains PFAS, and stops the incineration and landfilling of PFAS foam.

Drinking Water

- **New Hampshire** [HB 271](#) (2021) directs the Department of Environmental Services to set maximum contaminant limits for PFAS. This bill also enables the Department to make grants and loans to eligible municipalities, drinking water, and wastewater systems to address PFAS contamination

Medical Monitoring

- **Vermont** [S 113](#) (2022) gives individuals the right to seek medical monitoring of diseases linked to toxic chemical exposures from corporate polluters.

Cosmetics

- **Oregon** [SB 546](#) (2023) and **Washington** [HB 1047](#) (2023) banned PFAS and other harmful chemicals from cosmetics.

