



March 15, 2023

Dear Chair Klein and Committee Members,

PFAS Chemicals and the dangers associated with them are finally being addressed globally. Minnesota can be a leader and take a stand to protect both human health and the economy by taking proactive measures against PFAS in our state.

The Problem

Per- and polyfluorinated alkyl substances (PFAS) have been used by manufacturers for their grease- and water-proofing properties, but there are hundreds of other applications. PFAS have been linked to serious health problems such as cancer, hormone disruption, immune system suppression, decreased vaccine response, and reproductive problems.

PFAS are commonly used in cookware, cosmetics, food packaging, outdoor apparel, carpets, and firefighting foams among thousands of other products. These toxic compounds are also widely used in industrial processes and then discharged into waterways. PFAS are known as “forever chemicals” because they don't break down in the environment.

More than 2,800 sites in all 50 states are contaminated by PFAS, forcing states and localities to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on cleaning up PFAS pollution in their communities and providing safe drinking water for their residents.

Nearly every American has PFAS in their body. They are found in blood, breast milk, and even umbilical cord blood of newborn babies. Scientists from around the world are calling on governments to eliminate the entire class of PFAS where possible due to the significant human health and environmental impacts. A 2022 UN Human Rights Commission report urged countries to ban all uses of PFAS.

What's Being Done

State governments are taking legislative and regulatory action to phase out PFAS in products to prevent contamination in favor of safer alternatives. For example, laws in ME and WA have given state agencies authority to ban PFAS in a wide range of products.

- Eleven states including CA, CO, CT, HI, ME, MD, MN, NY, RI, VT, and WA have enacted phase-outs of PFAS in food packaging.
- Five states including CA, CO, MD, ME, and VT have adopted restrictions on PFAS in carpets, rugs, and aftermarket treatments and regulatory action is pending on these products and other home textiles in WA.
- CO adopted restrictions on indoor and outdoor furniture as well as oil and gas products.
- CA is phasing out PFAS in children's products.
- VT has banned PFAS in ski wax.
- Three states including CA, CO, and MD are taking action to eliminate PFAS in cosmetics.
- Eleven states including CA, CO, CT, HI, IL, ME, MD, NH, NY, VT, and WA have put in place bans on the sale or use of firefighting foam containing PFAS.



How Minnesota can Lead in the Battle Against PFAS

It's vital we pass legislation banning PFAS, educating consumers about the products they purchase, and giving Minnesotans the right to pursue legal action against companies for exposing them to toxic chemicals.

These bills will protect Minnesota families' health and pocketbooks. We can't keep paying to clean up toxic PFAS, only to dump more into landfills and our waterways. We must take swift and decisive action. We are grateful to the authors and urge support of:

- Information Disclosure (SF450 / HF372)
- Firefighting Foam Loophole Closure (SF776 / HF742)
- Non-Essential Use Ban (SF834 / HF1000)
- PFAS Ban in Juvenile Products (HF552)
- PFAS Ban in Ski Wax (SF669)
- Medical Monitoring

It's Time to Save Lives and Money

Minnesota is currently spending millions of dollars to clean up PFAS from our water. The problem is that we keep adding more PFAS to the water, which in turn requires costly clean up. We must turn off the tap! We must stop PFAS from entering our water in the first place so clean up *means something and accomplishes its goals*. We're throwing money at this problem that we are creating.

By passing these pieces of PFAS legislation we are preventing the need for future costly cleanup. And, more importantly, we are protecting our friends, family, and neighbors from deadly exposure.

In appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Astarck".

Avonna Starck
State Director
Clean Water Action

In partnership with:

Audubon Minnesota
Eureka Recycling
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Land Stewardship Project
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