



What are PFAS?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) describe a group of thousands of human-made chemical compounds found in everyday products. Manufacturers and consumers tend to use PFAS because they have heat, water, and oil resistant properties.

Widespread use of PFAS to produce common products leads to human and animal exposure, typically as a result of the chemicals migrating to water, air, and soil. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cites research that suggests elevated levels of certain PFAS may have negative health impacts.



How does PFAS enter wastewater?

PFAS are not products of wastewater treatment but are present in wastewater that leaves homes and businesses. PFAS enters wastewater when people wash, rinse, or clean products containing the chemicals. The water then enters the sewer system.

Technologies to remove PFAS from wastewater exist but do not destroy the chemicals. The PFAS must still be disposed of once they are moved to another waste stream.

Publicly owned clean water utilities are passive receivers of PFAS. Metro Water Recovery does not produce, use, or manufacture the chemicals. Metro receives PFAS through wastewater that arrives at our treatment plants from homes and businesses.



What can you do?

Help protect our rivers and lakes by making informed choices about the products you use at home and in the workplace.

Avoid or minimize the use of products that contain PFAS. Often these are products that are non-stick or stain resistant. Products that frequently contain PFAS include:

- Carpets and rugs
- Non-stick cooking pans
- Cosmetics
- Infant car seats, mattresses, and play mats.
- Ski wax
- Water repellent fabrics
- Paper food packaging

While Metro Water Recovery is asking the public to help reduce PFAS before it enters the sanitary sewer, the responsibility to remove these substances from the water cycle should be placed on the producers and manufacturers that incorporate PFAS into their products.

Use this resource to find PFAS-free products:



<https://pfascentral.org/pfas-free-products/>

¹ Learn more about the health effects of PFAS from the CDC at www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/health-effects



Biosolids

Biosolids are an environmentally safe and friendly form of fertilizer that have been a by-product of the traditional wastewater treatment process for decades. The solids recovered from wastewater are fully treated and then used to produce the nutrient-rich product. PFAS are not generated by the biosolids treatment process. Metro's preliminary sampling results indicate there are low levels of PFAS in biosolids.

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We will continue to work with our METROGRO Farmers to ensure safe application.



Metro's Promise

As a leader in the resource recovery industry and committed stewards of the environment, Metro is working locally, regionally, and nationally to advocate for regulations that control PFAS at the source.

For monitoring results and more information, visit: <https://www.metrowaterrecovery.com/>

