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LEGISLATION

EPA Releases Initial Nationwide Monitoring Data on 29 PFAS and Lithium

First of 12 sets of data to be released through 2026; information further builds upon EPA actions to address PFAS in Drinking Water

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is releasing the first set of data collected under the fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 5). In the latest action to deliver on [EPA's PFAS Strategic Roadmap](#), UCMR 5 will provide new data that will improve EPA's understanding of the frequency that [29 PFAS](#) and lithium are found in the nation's drinking water systems, and at what levels.

The monitoring data on PFAS and lithium will help the Agency make determinations about future actions to protect public health under the Safe Drinking Water Act. This action advances the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to combat PFAS pollution and safeguard drinking water for all people.

"PFAS are an urgent public health issue facing people and communities across the nation. The latest science is clear: exposure to certain PFAS, also known as forever chemicals, over long periods of time is linked to significant health risks," said Assistant Administrator for Water Radhika Fox. "That's why the Biden-Harris Administration is leading a whole-of-government approach to address these harmful chemicals. As part of this commitment, EPA is conducting the most comprehensive monitoring effort for PFAS ever, at every large and midsize public water system in America, and at hundreds small water systems."

The data collected under UCMR 5 will ensure science-based decision-making and help EPA better understand national-level exposure to these 29 PFAS and lithium, and whether they disproportionately impact communities with environmental justice concerns. This initial data release represents approximately 7% of the total results that EPA expects to receive over the next three years. The Agency will update the results quarterly and share them with the public in [EPA's National Contaminant Occurrence Database \(NCOD\)](#) until completion of data reporting in 2026. EPA continues to conduct research and monitor advances in techniques that may improve our ability to measure these and other contaminants at even lower levels.

EPA is acting to protect peoples' health from PFAS in drinking water. In March 2023, EPA [proposed standards to limit certain PFAS in drinking water](#). The proposal, if finalized, would allow public water systems to use results from UCMR 5 to meet the rule's initial monitoring requirements and to inform communities of actions that may need to be taken. In the interim period before the PFAS drinking water standard is final, EPA has established [Health Advisories](#) for four PFAS included in the UCMR 5. EPA continues to advance the science on the potential health effects of a wide range of PFAS, including many of those monitored for under this program.

EPA is moving forward to expand the investigation and cleanup of PFAS contaminated sites, including by finalizing new safeguards under Superfund to hold polluters accountable for contamination from two widely used PFAS chemicals. The Agency also recent issued its third order to require PFAS manufacturers to conduct testing under EPA's National Testing Strategy to help EPA better confront these forever chemicals.

EPA is also deploying an unprecedented \$9 billion, included in President Biden's [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#), specifically to invest in communities with drinking water

impacted by PFAS and other emerging contaminants. This includes \$4 billion via the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) and \$5 billion through EPA's "Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities" grant program. States, Tribes and communities can further leverage an additional nearly \$12 billion in BIL DWSRF funds and billions more in annual SRF funds dedicated to making drinking water safer. These funds will help communities make important investments in solutions to remove PFAS from drinking water.

For more information visit [EPA's Ground Water and Drinking Water webpage](#).

Background

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) specifies that every five years EPA is required to monitor for priority contaminants that may be present in drinking water but are not yet subject to EPA drinking water regulations. EPA uses the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR) to provide the agency and other interested parties with nationally representative data on the occurrence of contaminants in drinking water, the number of people potentially being exposed, and an estimate of the levels of that exposure. These data can support future regulatory determinations, the development of national primary drinking water regulations (NPDWRs), and other actions to protect public health. EPA's Fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule ([UCMR 5](#)) requires sample collection for 30 chemical contaminants (29 PFAS and lithium) between 2023 and 2025 using analytical methods developed by EPA and consensus organizations.

SOURCE: USEPA

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