

Josh Kaul
Wisconsin Attorney General



P.O. Box 7857
Madison, WI 53707-7857

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AG Kaul Leads 19 AGs in Urging EPA to Require Public Water Systems to Monitor for Additional PFAS

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul is leading a coalition of 19 attorneys general, led by Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul, [today filed comments](#) to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) supporting the agency’s proposal to include 29 per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, more commonly known as PFAS or “forever” chemicals, in the fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 5). Through UCMR 5, EPA will require public water systems to monitor for these PFAS, which will provide valuable data about the occurrence of PFAS contamination in public water supplies around the country.

While supportive of requiring public water systems to monitor for these 29 PFAS, the states also asked EPA to: (1) require monitoring for total PFAS; (2) promptly validate an analytical method for total PFAS; (3) advance environmental justice with PFAS monitoring; and (4) lower the minimum reporting levels for the PFAS included in UCMR 5.

“Wisconsin DOJ is continuing to be a leader in advocating for stronger federal protections against PFAS contamination because of the importance of this issue to communities across the state. Safe and clean water is vital to the health and safety of Wisconsinites. We must have stronger protections against forever chemicals,” said Attorney General Josh Kaul.

PFAS chemicals resist degradation in the environment and accumulate in the body. Those contaminants may be linked to serious adverse health effects in humans and animals. Epidemiologic studies have shown that potential adverse human health effects from exposure to some PFAS include increased serum cholesterol, immune dysregulation, pregnancy-induced hypertension, and kidney and testicular cancers. Exposure to certain types of PFAS is also associated with low birthweight in humans, suppressed immune system response, dyslipidemia, impaired kidney function, and delayed onset of menstruation.

Across the country, PFAS contamination is most often associated with military bases, firefighting training centers, civilian airports, and industrial facilities. PFAS chemicals tend to be persistent in the environment and have been used for decades as ingredients in firefighting foam. Some states with significant PFAS contamination are currently spending tens of millions of dollars to address the contamination in public drinking water systems, and to investigate numerous areas and sources of potential contamination.

The attorneys general state in the letter, “The States have a strong interest in ensuring that their residents have access to safe drinking water. Although numerous studies have shown that exposures to PFAS negatively affect human health, there is currently no national requirement that all public water systems test for and remove unsafe levels of PFAS in drinking water. Millions of people across the United States are exposed to PFAS-contaminated drinking water and widespread releases of PFAS into the environment. The States have limited resources to comprehensively assess and address PFAS. Therefore, it is crucial for EPA to broadly regulate PFAS under the SDWA to protect public health and the environment and to do so in accordance with the States’ proposed enhancements to the UCMR 5.”

Attorney General Kaul is leading the attorneys general from the following jurisdictions in submitting the letter: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Washington.

[Read the comment letter here.](#)