

PFAS and Drinking Water

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are widely used in industry and in household products. PFAS are a large group of human-made chemicals that are not naturally found in the environment. Depending on where your water source is located, your water may be contaminated by PFAS.

Where do PFAS come from?



For decades, PFAS have been used as a fire suppressant in firefighting foams, and across industries, including metal plating and the manufacturing of consumer products like carpeting, waterproof clothing, and food paper wrappings. This widespread use of PFAS has resulted in environmental contamination. While some types of PFAS are no longer used in these industries and products, other PFAS are still in use.

Where are PFAS used?



Airports and military bases. PFAS have and continue to be used in some firefighting foam. Groundwater contaminated with PFAS near airports and military bases is often associated with firefighting foams.



Manufacturing facilities. PFAS are used in manufacturing operations. They can be released into lakes and rivers as wastewater. PFAS may also be found in industrial waste streams and have the potential to seep into soil and groundwater at wastewater treatment sites.



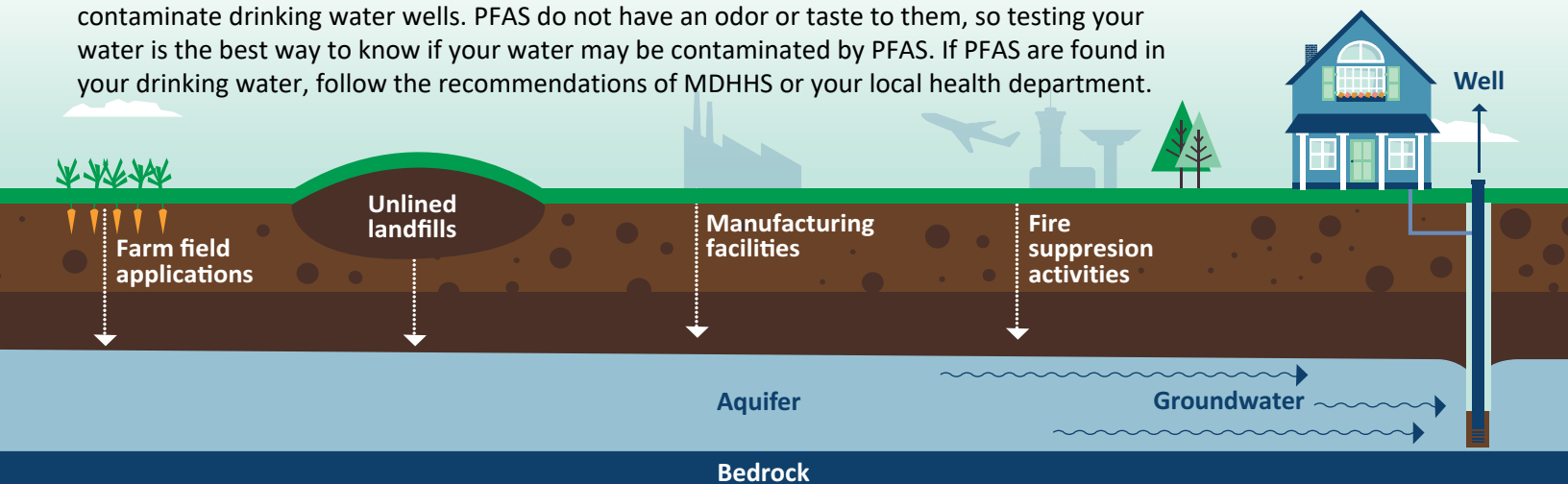
Landfills. PFAS are used in many different consumer products that eventually end up in landfills. PFAS in unlined landfills can seep from the soil into groundwater.



Farmland. PFAS may be in treated sewage sludge, which is sometimes used on farmland as fertilizer. Once applied, it can seep into groundwater and be absorbed into crops.

How do PFAS get into drinking water?

When PFAS are released in the environment, they can seep into groundwater which can contaminate drinking water wells. PFAS do not have an odor or taste to them, so testing your water is the best way to know if your water may be contaminated by PFAS. If PFAS are found in your drinking water, follow the recommendations of MDHHS or your local health department.



For more information about PFAS, visit the MPART website at Michigan.gov/PFASresponse or call MDHHS at 800-648-6942.