

What Can I Do?



The Stewart Air National Guard Restoration Advisory Board meets quarterly to discuss how the Department of Defense will clean up the PFAS contamination. Meetings are open to everyone and include opportunities for public comment. The Board includes representatives from our community. As community representatives step down, you could apply to serve on the board.



State and/or federal funding is used to support the City of Newburgh's purchase of safe drinking water from New York City's Catskill Aqueduct. It is vital that these funds are maintained in order to support and protect Newburgh's residents and their health. Access to the Catskill Aqueduct must be made available until Washington Lake is fully cleaned up.



Contact your Local, State and Federal Representatives to ensure the best decisions regarding water quality standards, legislation and enforcement are being made. Public health should be a top priority. Our voice counts!

Representatives for City of Newburgh, Town of Newburgh and New Windsor:

- U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer - (518) 431-4070
- U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand - (202) 224-4451
- U.S. Representative Sean Patrick Maloney - (202) 225-5441
- NYS Senator James Skoufis - (845) 567-1270
- NYS Assembly Member Jonathan Jacobson (District 104) - (845) 562-0888
- NYS Assembly Member Colin Schmitt (District 99) - (845) 469-6929
- NYS Governor Kathy Hochul - (518) 474-8390



Consider participating in the Multi-site PFAS Health Study. This is the first study to look at relationships between exposure to PFAS in drinking water and certain health outcomes in multiple communities nationwide, including Newburgh. E-mail pfas@albany.edu or call 833-732-7697.



Join our mailing list to help us help you. As we become aware of decisions that you can influence, we will contact you and ask for help.

www.Riverkeeper.org/newburgh

PFAS IN NEWBURGH



A community guide: *What You Need to Know*

What Is PFAS?

Hundreds of products are made with highly toxic fluorinated chemicals called PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances). PFAS, often referred to as "forever chemicals" are incredibly persistent. They never break down in the environment and may remain in our bodies for years.

How Am I Exposed?



Since their development in the 1940s, PFAS have become integrated into everyday items. Many products are found to contain PFAS such as: cosmetics, food packaging, stain-resistant textiles, non-stick cookware, outdoor gear with a "water repellent" coatings, and many specialty items such as firefighting foams, ski wax, and industrial applications.



PFAS makes their way into the environment through production or waste streams. PFAS emissions can travel through wind and be deposited in soil, streams and rivers and ultimately affect wildlife and the food we eat such as fish caught in contaminated waters.



Discharges, spills or PFAS "releases" can lead to PFAS entering the environment. Even after disposal these chemicals can leak from landfills.

What Are the Health Risks?

Exposure to PFAS has been linked to serious health issues including:

- cancer
- thyroid disorders
- liver damage
- high cholesterol
- decreased fertility
- increased risk of asthma



PFAS interfere with:

- the body's hormones
- the ability to fight infection
- growth & development in children



The number of U.S. communities confirmed to be contaminated with PFAS continues to grow at an alarming rate. As of August 2021, 2,854 locations in 50 states and two territories are known to be contaminated. *ewg.org

How Can I Reduce My Family's PFAS Exposure?

- Avoid products that are known to contain PFAS, including some water-resistant fabrics, makeup and stain-resistant carpets and furniture.
- Avoid eating food packaged in grease-resistant materials, such as microwave popcorn and fast food.
- Do not to eat fish caught from Washington Lake, Silver Stream or part of Moodna Creek due to PFAS contamination in fish.
- Become familiar with your drinking water sources and if on a private well, have it tested.



How Did Newburgh Become Impacted By PFAS?



For decades, firefighting foam containing PFAS had been released from Stewart Air National Guard Base into the environment. This resulted in extensive contamination in and outside of the base's property including private drinking wells, Silver Stream and Washington Lake, a Newburgh drinking water source.

In May 2016, the City of Newburgh and surrounding areas were hit with the devastating news that our watershed and drinking water had been polluted, leaving Washington Lake unusable. In August 2016, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) declared Stewart Air National Guard Base a New York State Superfund Site. The U.S. Department of Defense is tasked with investigating and remediating the pollution.

What's Being Done?

- The City of Newburgh's drinking water currently comes from New York City's Catskill Aqueduct or Brown's Pond, Newburgh's backup reservoir in the Town of New Windsor. The water system also now has a filter capable of removing PFAS.
- New York State has tested and provided filters for homes that rely on private wells in the vicinity.
- The Department of Defense has installed a filter at Stewart to remove PFAS before polluted runoff leaves the base, under some conditions.
- Further cleanup steps will be determined based on an ongoing study called the Remedial Investigation. Community members have a voice in the process through the Restoration Advisory Board.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2017, the *Clean Water Infrastructure Act* committed \$2.5 billion to expand drinking water protections for millions of New Yorkers.



Learn more by visiting:
www.Riverkeeper.org/newburgh