Canada

Key Links

- Canadian Information on PFASs
- Prohibition of Certain Toxic Substances Regulations, 2012
- Proposed Prohibition of Certain Toxic Substances Regulations (2022)
- New Substances Notification Regulations(Chemicals and Polymers)
- Federal Environmental Quality Guidelines for Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS)
- Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality for PFOS and PFOA
- Action Plan for Contaminated Sites
- Federal Contaminated Sites Inventory

Recent Initiatives

On May 14, 2022, the Government of Canada published the proposed Prohibition of Certain Toxic Substances Regulations, 2022 to further restrict the manufacture, use, sale and import of PFOS, PFOA, and LC-PFCAs, their salts and precursors, by removing or providing time limits for most remaining exemptions.

On April 24, 2021, the Government of Canada published a Notice of intent to move forward with activities to address the broad class of PFASs.

On September 23, 2021, the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) published Canadian environmental quality guidelines for PFOS in soil and groundwater.

Overview of Risk Reduction Approaches

In the past, Canada has implemented a combination of regulatory and voluntary actions to reduce the risk of certain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs).

Several PFASs have been assessed as meeting the criteria in the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* (CEPA) to be considered toxic to the environment. These substances have been added to the List of Toxic Substances in Schedule 1 of CEPA and are regulated in Canada by the *Prohibition of Certain Toxic Substances Regulations, 2012*.

These subgroups of PFASs include:

- Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), its salts, and precursors,
- Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), which has the molecular formula $C_7F_{15}CO_2H$, its salts, and its precursors, and
- Long-chain perfluorocarboxylic acids that have the molecular formula $C_nF_{2n+1}CO_2H$ in which $8 \leq n \leq 20$ (LC-PFCAs), their salts and their precursors.

The *Prohibition of Certain Toxic Substances Regulations, 2012* prohibits the manufacture, use, sale, offer for sale and import of PFOS, PFOA, LC-PFCAs, their salts and precursors, and products that contain these substances, with a limited number of exemptions.

On May 14, 2022, the proposed *Prohibition of Certain Toxic Substances Regulations, 2022* were published in *Canada Gazette*, Part I. These proposed regulations would further restrict the manufacture, use, sale and import of PFOS, PFOA and LC-PFCAs, and products containing them by removing or providing time-limits for most remaining exemptions. These proposed regulations would repeal and replace the *Prohibition of Certain Toxic Substances Regulations, 2012* on the day the final Regulations come into force.

The *New Substances Notification Regulations (Chemicals and Polymers)* ensure that notified new PFASs (not listed on the Domestic Substances List (DSL)) are assessed for potential risks to the environment and the general public originating from industrial and other relevant uses. PFASs are not grouped when they are assessed under these regulations; each new substance arrives at a different point in time and is individually evaluated for

potential risks. If required, control measures (in addition to any existing restrictions that may apply) are put in place before they are imported into or manufactured in Canada.

In addition, a number of guidelines for the protection of human health and the environment on PFOS and PFOA have been developed by the Government of Canada. These were developed federally by the Government of Canada (i.e., Federal Environmental Quality Guidelines, Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines) or through the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) (i.e., Canadian Environmental Quality Guidelines).

Federal contaminated sites are located on land owned or leased by the federal government, or on land where the federal government has accepted responsibility for the contamination. The Federal Contaminated Sites Inventory shows more than 23,000 suspected, active, and closed federal contaminated sites, of which there are over 100 sites with confirmed or suspected PFAS contamination. The Government of Canada continues to take action through the Federal Contaminated Sites Action Plan (FCSAP) to reduce environmental and human health risks from known federal contaminated sites.

In 2006, Canada initiated monitoring on PFASs in several media including air, water, sediment, aquatic and terrestrial biota, wastewater and biosolids. In addition, Canada has also undertaken biomonitoring of these substances as part of the Canadian Health Measures Survey.

On April 24, 2021, the Government of Canada published a Notice of intent to move forward with activities to address the broad class of PFASs because scientific evidence to date indicates the PFASs used to replace regulated PFOS, PFOA, and LC-PFCAs, their salts and precursors, may also be associated with environmental and/or human health effects. The Government of Canada will continue to invest in research and monitoring on PFASs, collect and examine information on PFASs to inform a class-based approach, and review policy developments in other jurisdictions. By April 2023, the Government of Canada will publish a state of PFASs report, which will summarize relevant information on the class of PFASs. It will be open to the public for their comments and feedback.

Table with Key Elements of Risk Reduction Approaches

Action	Path taken	BEPs Implemented	Category of PFASss addressed	Articles covered?	Life cycle stage(s) addressed	Method of approach	Public-private partnership encouraged?	Level of constraint
Prohibition of Certain Toxic Substances Regulations, 2012	Prohibit the manufacture, use, sale, and import	Minimisation of PFASs used	PFOA, its salts and precursors LC-PFCAs, their salts and precursors PFOS, its salts and precursors	Yes, but only the manufacture Yes	Chemical and product manufacture, use, sale and import	Regulatory	No	Full prohibition (with a limited number of exemptions)
New Substances Notification Regulations (Chemicals and Polymers), as appropriate and consistent with existing restrictions	As appropriate, prohibit or limit the manufacture, import, and use of substances not listed on the DSL	Assessment of substances new to Canada and put in place appropriate control measures if risks are identified	PFASs not listed on the DSL	No	Manufacture, import and use	Regulatory	No	Full or partial prohibition, or conditions imposed
Federal Environmental Quality Guidelines for Perfluorooctane	Federal Environmental Quality Guidelines (FEQGs)	N/A	PFOS	No	N/A	Voluntary/Guidance	No	None

Sulfonate (PFOS) in water, tissues and wildlife diet	provide benchmarks for the quality of the ambient environment							
Canadian Environmental Quality Guidelines for Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) in soils and groundwater	Canadian Environmental Quality Guidelines (CEQGs) for soils and groundwater provide benchmarks for the assessment and remediation of contaminated sites	N/A	PFOS	No	N/A	Voluntary/Guidance	No	None
Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality for PFOS and PFOA	Maximum acceptable concentrations (MAC) of PFOS and PFOA in drinking water	N/A	PFOA and PFOS	No	N/A	Voluntary/Guidance	No	None

Additional Resources

- PFOS environmental indicator
- PFOS, its salts and precursors – information sheet
- Toxic substances list: PFOS, its salts and precursors
- PFOA, its salts, and its precursors - information sheet
- LC-PFCAs, their salts, and their precursors - information sheet
- Toxic substances list: PFOA and LC-PFCAs, their salts and precursors
- Toxic substances list: Four fluorotelomer-based new substances