



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 19, 2016

EPA issues new Perfluorinated Compounds health advisory

DENVER - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced today it has lowered the health advisory levels for certain [Perfluorinated Compounds \(PFCs\)](#) in drinking water to 70 parts per trillion. The EPA health advisory provides guidance to federal, state and local officials about substances that are not otherwise regulated by the Safe Drinking Water Act.

PFCs are human-made chemicals that do not occur naturally in the environment. They have been used for decades in products such as firefighting foams, food wrappings, surface protection products for carpets and clothing, and other common commercial products.

EPA [lowered its advisory level](#) primarily due to concerns regarding low birth weight. There is limited scientific information about the human health effects of PFCs. Some studies suggest a link between PFCs and low birth weight, as well as a possible link with kidney and testicular cancers. The state health department analyzed historical data in the areas where PFCs have been detected and found no significant difference regarding low birth weight as compared to the rest of El Paso County. The department will continue to review health data in the area.

Because PFCs are not regulated by the Safe Drinking Water Act, water providers are not required to routinely sample for or remove PFCs from drinking water. Periodically, the EPA requires water districts with 10,000 or more customers to sample for contaminants of emerging concern. In Colorado, only the Security/Widefield/Fountain area ([see map](#)) detected PFCs.

As a precaution, individuals who have private wells in the Security/Widefield/Fountain area that have not been tested or exceed the new health advisory may consider other sources of water. This is especially important for women who are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding/bottle-feeding infants. Alternate sources of water include bottled water or water that is treated under the sink by a reverse osmosis system. El Paso County Public Health currently offers free water tests for residents who use private wells and live in the Security/Fountain/Widefield area. Call 719-575-8602 to set up an appointment.

People in the area who don't use private wells should consult the state health department's [table of water systems in the area](#) and check with their [local water system](#) about PFC sampling results.

Government agencies and public water systems are working to identify the source of the contamination in the Security/Widefield/Fountain area. For more information - [El Paso County Public Health](#) web page on PFCs and health.