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Illinois to Test For PFAs in Drinking Water

Environmental

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency [announced on Sep. 14](#) that it plans to conduct a statewide investigation into the presence of per- and polyfluororalkyl substances (PFAs) in the state's community water supply.

PFA contamination has attracted media attention in recent years since the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency established a federal Health Advisory for PFA's in 2016. These man-made chemicals have been used since the 1940s in numerous consumer and industrial applications — including nonstick products, polishes, waxes, paints, cleaning products, fire-fighting foams, etc. — although the use of some (such as PFOAs and PFOs) has now been phased out in the United States. Nonetheless, PFAs can still be found in certain imported products, such as carpet, textiles, rubber, plastics and other materials. Because PFAs do not break down, they can accumulate in the environment and in the human body, where they have been linked to adverse human health effects.

Illinois' drinking water investigation is estimated to take approximately 12-15 months, and the results will assist the state in developing regulatory standards for the chemicals. Going forward, we expect that property transfers and their attendant environmental audits will include PFA exposure potential.