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## Maryland Contamination Concern

**Suitland and Surrounding Areas Potentially At Risk of Drinking Water Contamination From Cancer-Causing**

# Firefighting Chemicals Used At Joint Base Andrews

What you need to know at a glance:

- Residents of Suitland and surrounding areas may have experienced drinking water contamination from cancer-causing chemicals used at **Joint Base Andrews**.
- The chemicals are Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) made by the companies DuPont, 3M®, Chemguard, and more.
- These are the same types of chemicals that were ingredients in Teflon® and Scotchgard®, also known as C-8 — *which you may have seen highlighted in a recent ABC News special, referencing the documentary, Dark Waters.*
- Both these chemicals are **main ingredients in firefighting foams**, referred to as AFFF (*Aqueous Film Forming Foam*).
- These foams (*AFFF*) are used in firefighting training exercises and were commonly used at facilities such as **Joint Base Andrews**.
- The PFOS and PFOA chemicals in these foams get **absorbed into the ground** and find their way into the aquifers which supply drinking water to residents who get their water from either a well or public municipality.
- The scientific studies linking AFFF water contamination to cancers, asthma, child development issues, liver disease and more are plentiful and growing.
- The following cancers have been linked to AFFF water contamination:
  - Breast cancer
  - Liver Cancer
  - Kidney cancer
  - Pancreatic cancer
  - Prostate cancer
  - Testicular cancer
- The government has phased out AFFF (*Aqueous Film Forming Foam*) containing PFOS and PFOA due to its significant health dangers, but its damaging effects on the environment and the health of innocent people remain.
- Our law firm (*Greenberg & Bederman*) is helping residents of Suitland and surrounding cities who have been diagnosed with cancer seek legal help for having potentially been cancer victims due to contaminated water.
- We are offering **free consultations** for those who have received a cancer diagnosis and currently live, or have lived, in Suitland or the surrounding areas (*approximately 10 mile radius*) around **Joint Base Andrews**.
- The consultation is free and without any obligation or risk. It's simply an opportunity to learn more about the emerging litigation and understand how you may benefit from participating.
- Interested residents can simply call [888-252-4480](tel:888-252-4480) or fill out our free consultation request form [ [here](#) ].

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**Do you live near Joint Base Andrews in Suitland, Maryland and have been diagnosed with cancer?**

Residents who live in Suitland, or within approximately 10 miles of Joint Base Andrews in Morningside, MD may have been exposed to the highly-carcinogenic chemicals, PFOA and PFOS — *ingredients used in (AFFF) firefighting foams.*



## What are (AFFF) firefighting foams?

These (AFFF) firefighting foams are used to fight fuel fires. AFFF (*pronounced "A triple F"*) stands for **Aqueous Film Forming Foam**.

These foams are most often sprayed out of a hose. The foam is pretty thick and blankets the burning object, the flames and the surrounding ground thoroughly, robbing the fire of the oxygen it desperately needs.

AFFF is most commonly used at **airports, military bases and firefighting training facilities**.

Because a facility like Joint Base Andrews is at-risk of fuel fires, on-site firefighters train with, and use, these man-made chemical foams.

*Continue reading...*

## What cancer-causing chemicals are in the foam?

Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (*PFOS*) and Perfluorooctanoic Acid (*PFOA*) are two man-made chemicals found in AFFF firefighting foams that have been found to be carcinogenic and environmentally dangerous.

PFOS and PFOA are chemicals that are part of a bigger class of synthetic compounds called PFAS. **There are hundreds of PFAS chemicals currently in use today**, however PFOS and PFOA are two of the most researched and worrisome.

The big problem with PFOS and PFOA is that **they don't breakdown quickly** — *either in our body, or the environment*.

It can take decades for these man-made chemicals to breakdown. **This means once they enter our body they may never leave**

This is why both PFOS and PFOA have been termed by chemists as **forever chemicals**.

The cancer-causing health dangers of PFOS and PFOA have become one of the biggest health concerns within our government today. Numerous documentaries have even brought to light the many PFOS and PFOA water contamination events in the US.

The most recent and noteworthy was the movie, *Dark Waters*, which chronicled the **real-life story of a West Virginia town whose people become very sick with cancers, diseases and birth defects** after a DuPont factory dumped PFOA and PFAS into streams which found its way into the town's drinking water.

*Watch this short video...*



*Continue reading...*

## **How do these chemicals get into my drinking water?**

When the AFFF firefighting foam is sprayed, it gets all over the ground. The foam eventually absorbs into the ground through the soil. **This is how groundwater contamination occurs.**

*Groundwater is simply water that is underground.* It is water that at one point was at the surface and absorbed deeper into the ground, such as what happens when it rains.

Groundwater is one of the **main sources of drinking water** in the US. Therefore, when groundwater becomes contaminated, so does our drinking water.



Groundwater can move, too. It flows within "aquifers", which are underground channels within the earth's substrate that groundwater moves through.

If you have well water at your home, you are familiar with aquifers. *Your well taps into an aquifer deep in the ground. Your drinking water is the groundwater coming from that aquifer.*

*Continue reading...*

**Are all sources of drinking water contaminated? Both public water and well water?**

In many large-scale case studies at other locations where drinking water contamination occurred, it has occurred **both in the water sourced from residential water wells AND water sourced via municipality (ie. public water utility).**

Both residential wells and local water municipalities get their water from similar sources — either from groundwater sources (ie. aquifers) or from surfacewater reservoirs. Both

have been shown to be extremely susceptible to contamination from AFFF firefighting foams.

*Continue reading...*



**Is AFFF containing the dangerous PFOA and PFAS still in use at Joint Base Andrews?**

No. At least not during training exercises.

The use and storage of AFFF in the United States is **currently being phased out** due to its environmental and health risks. In fact, many states have issued an outright ban of the use of AFFF firefighting foams even in cases of fire emergencies.

Many governments are beginning to take action because the science strongly suggests cancers and diseases are **occurring at high rates in the firefighters** using the foam, **as well as the residents** who live in proximity to the areas the foams are used.

The EPA and other agencies are currently testing drinking water in numerous cities across the US and have found many areas with **disturbingly high levels** of PFOS and PFOA. Much higher rates of diseases and cancers in those same areas were also found.

Unfortunately, because these are "forever chemicals" and take decades to breakdown, the dangerous effects of these chemicals are still here and wreaking havoc on our health.



## How would I know if my drinking water is contaminated with AFFF chemicals?

If your drinking water is supplied via public utility or municipality, sometimes the testing results for PFAS contamination is made publicly available -- so that is the first place to look. You can call or write your local water provider and ask, "When was the last test for PFAS levels in my drinking water performed, and what was the result?". Hopefully they have tested for PFAS contamination, and have done so recently.

There are also numerous companies, agencies and organizations that can come to your home and test your drinking water for PFAS contaminants such as PFOA and PFOS (*the man-made chemicals in AFFF*).

Simply Google, "*Water Testing Labs near Suitland*" and many of the options will be presented.

You want to look for a lab or company that has been certified to analyze drinking water samples and can **detect PFAS chemicals to the part per trillion.**

Also, many at-home water delivery companies (ie. *Culligan*) are now offering to test your drinking water. Some even offer to do it for free, in hopes that if you don't like the level of contamination you find in the water from your well or municipality, that you will buy water jug delivery from them. So that is an option, too.

There are also numerous local and state environmental and health organizations in your area that have water testing labs. However, their willingness to do individual "house calls" to test drinking water is at their discretion — so if you reach out to them inquiring about water testing at your home, **they may or may not agree to do it**. Not because they don't want to help, but many of these agencies are extremely busy with existing projects and larger-scale water analysis.

*Continue reading...*



## **Do I need to get my water tested?**

No. While it's certainly prudent to know what is in your drinking water, it is not necessary to test it to participate or be eligible in the emerging litigation.

The reason it isn't required is because PFOA and PFOS levels in drinking water **can fluctuate greatly** over time.

Also, AFFF firefighting foam use is declining more and more — *and in many states it has been banned*. Levels may have been exceptionally high in Suitland and surrounding areas for many years past, but may have tapered or improved by now.

But, because PFOA and PFOS chemicals never breakdown or biodegrade (*not in the environment or in our bodies*), drinking water contamination in past years may have caused

significant chemical accumulation in your body — *and the accumulation over time is what may cause serious health problems like cancer.*

This is why health researchers are **still finding high rates of cancer and disease** in areas that have relatively low levels of contamination now, but at some point in the past had high levels. Newer and cleaner water can move through the underground aquifers, but our bodies never breakdown what we were already exposed to.

## **Can a water filter remove the dangerous chemicals in AFFF?**

Yes and no. Carbon-based filters, which are the most popular, can remove "some" PFOA and PFOS from the water, but typically not 100% of it.

Typical refrigerator filters, water filter pitchers and faucet-mount pitchers simply do not remove all of these dangerous chemicals, **but they can help.**

The higher quality filters, obviously, are better at removing more chemicals than cheaper, less expensive ones you may find for under \$100.

Multi-step ion exchange and reverse osmosis filtration also help in the removal of PFOA and PFOS and are good steps to add to activated carbon filtration.

Most conventional microbial or chemical water treatments (*by themselves*), however, do not work well in removing these chemicals.

## **Is there a test I can take to see if my cancer was caused by AFFF firefighting foam chemicals?**

There are blood tests your doctor can give you to determine the levels of PFOA and PFAS in your system, however, **they are considered inaccurate** and thus potentially not worth the effort and costs.

Beyond the tests themselves not having a high-level of accuracy, the levels of these chemicals in your body fluctuate. *And the high levels that may have caused your cancer may not still be present in your body.*

To date, the best marker for understanding if AFFF may have caused your cancer is to **determine if AFFF was used in close proximity to where you have lived or worked.**

Over 99% of humans test positive for levels of AFFF chemicals (PFOA and PFAS) in their system — *so we all have it.* But some of us, unfortunately, have been exposed to more of it because our groundwater supply comes from the same area AFFF was used at or near.



## Am I living in a cancer cluster? Do I need to move?

It is scary to think about the possibility that use of (AFFF) firefighting foam at Joint Base Andrews could have contaminated the drinking water in Suitland and its surrounding areas.

It is even scarier to think this could be the reason for your *(or your loved one's)* cancer.

The area's surrounding Joint Base Andrews are still being investigated for PFOA and PFOS drinking water contamination. Further, not all areas may be impacted similarly — *as water underground moves in different directions.*

EPA data shows that over 1,500 public drinking water systems nationwide have **detectable levels of PFOA and PFAS** in the drinking water.

Additionally, the Defense Department identified 401 military facilities across the US where PFOA and PFAS chemicals have been used. Of those 401, **at least 160 of those facilities had contaminated drinking water.**

## Where are the at-risk areas around Joint Base Andrews?

We believe anyone who lives within an approximately 10 radius of Joint Base Andrews may be at-risk of having had PFOA and PFOS drinking water contamination due to use of AFFF firefighting foams.

This includes the cities and surrounding areas of:

- Suitland
- Clinton
- Camp Springs
- District Heights
- Morningside
- Marlow Heights
- Temple Hills
- Oxon Hill

- Forestville
- Rosaryville
- Marlton
- Cheltenham
- Largo
- Forest Heights
- Walker Mill
- Upper Marlboro
- Brandywine
- Friendly
- Fort Washington
- Piscataway
- Hillcrest Heights

Residents who receive drinking water from a well or municipality may be at-risk, due to the nature of groundwater movement and hydrogeological flow around Joint Base Andrews.



**Will home values decrease in Suitland and surrounding areas?**

Areas that are found to have drinking water contamination linked to cancer, disease and birth defects can suffer **devastating declines in home values.**

NEW BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRY CAN ALSO BE RELUCTANT TO MOVE INTO AREAS WITH KNOWN WATER CONTAMINATION, AS WELL, FURTHER CONTRIBUTING TO A **DECLINING HOUSING MARKET** IN THE REGION.

We have seen this very thing happen in Parkersburg, WV, Oscoda, MI, and Hoosick Falls, NY — *to name a few*. These regions suffered PFOA and PFOS water contamination and subsequently higher cancer rates.

It's hard to sell a home when people think living in a certain area could be disastrous to their health or their family's health.

*Continue reading...*



## **Who is at fault for this?**

These "forever" chemicals that are main ingredients of AFFF firefighting foam are made by **chemical companies** such as DuPont, 3M®, Chemguard, BASF, Tyco International and more.

For decades, these companies **may have known there were serious health risks** associated with PFOA and PFOS, but they continued to manufacture and sell these chemicals as part of the AFFF firefighting foams.

neighboring residents of these chemical factories and the airports, military bases and firefighting training facilities that use their products (*ie. Joint Base Andrews*) have been fighting to ban their use for years. Thankfully the government, notably the EPA, has stepped in and has **forced a phasing out of the use of these dangerous chemicals.**

**But now innocent people are left with devastating cancer diagnoses and chronic diseases.** Not to mention the heartbreaking cases where birth defects have resulted from exposure to these chemicals in the drinking water.

**I live within the 10 mile radius of Joint Base Andrews — *and I was diagnosed with cancer. What should I do next?***

The best first step may be to **take advantage of our free consultation with our water contamination legal team** — who can better help you understand what help may be available to you.

Additionally, make sure you have clean drinking water from this point forward. That could mean using quality water filtration in your home, having clean water delivered to your home, or having your water tested to ensure it is free from these dangerous chemicals.

Our staff is happy to help you understand all the options that are available.

Our law firm is currently helping **residents who live in proximity to Joint Base Andrews** who have suffered a cancer diagnosis seek financial compensation for potentially having been exposed to PFOA or PFOS in their drinking water due to use of AFFF firefighting foam at Joint Base Andrews.

The consultation is totally free, and without any risk or obligation. It's simply your opportunity to find out what is happening and what your options are moving forward.

**IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND:** There is a very small window of time for cancer victims to seek financial compensation after a chemical exposure - it is called the "statute of limitations" and the time window for pursuing a case is limited in Maryland.

**\*\*So please do not wait to speak to our attorneys.\*\***

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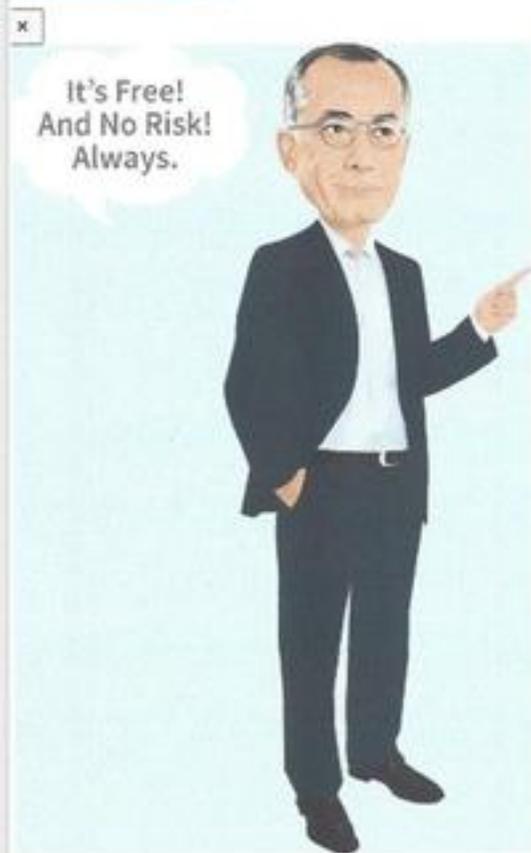
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