

Environment & Energy

Pennsylvania's Plan to Limit 'Forever Chemicals' Open for Debate

By Zach Bright

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Pennsylvania's plan to set maximum contaminant levels for two types of "forever chemicals" in drinking water is now open for public comment, the state's environmental agency said.

Water containing two forms of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)—a chemical class used in certain cookware, carpets, packaging and more—will be restricted by the state's Department of Environmental Protection. Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) will be limited to 18 parts per trillion, while perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) will be limited to 14 parts per trillion.

1. Pennsylvania's rules would surpass the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's current 70 parts per trillion standard for PFOS and PFOA combined.
2. Although the chemicals aren't fully understood, the Department of Environmental Protection said Pennsylvania is at the "forefront of states taking proactive steps," noting the substances' association with adverse health effects.
3. The announcement to open 60 days of public comment comes in the wake of Wisconsin's rejection of a similar groundwater policy.
4. The EPA has proposed designating PFOA and PFOS as hazardous substances under the Superfund law.

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Topics

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