

Class B Firefighting Foam Use

Background

Older types of Class B firefighting foam — the type used for flammable and combustible liquid firefighting — contain perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances. This class of fluorinated organic chemicals is referred to as PFAS chemicals. Aqueous film forming foams (AFFF) are often considered PFAS chemicals.

PFAS chemicals have been determined to be hazardous to humans, especially when they contaminate groundwater and drinking water.

Training with PFAS foams is prohibited

As of July 1, 2020, it will be illegal to discharge PFAS firefighting foams for training or testing purposes. There are a few exceptions to this prohibition but they require containment, treatment and disposal measures to prevent the release of PFAS foams to the environment.

Firefighting with PFAS foams

As of July 1, 2020, fire departments using PFAS firefighting foams must report their use within 24 hours. The reporting requirement includes the following:

- Date, time and location of the PFAS firefighting foam use.
- Estimated amount of PFAS firefighting foam used.
- Purpose or reason for the use of PFAS firefighting foam.
- Containment, treatment, and disposal measures to be taken to prevent or minimize the release of PFAS firefighting foam to the environment.

Reporting method

Fire departments using the state's ImageTrend online fire reporting system can report PFAS use on that system after July 1, 2020. Fire departments using other reporting software must fill out a hard copy of the report and send it to the SFMD Data Team at fm.data.team@state.mn.us. Those fire departments will also need to add this information into the incident's narrative report.

Statute reference

A copy of the applicable statute is online at <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/325F.072>

