

PFAS Exposure Assessment:

El Paso County, Colorado

INFORMATION TO PROTECT OUR COMMUNITIES



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) will **begin an exposure assessment of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in drinking water near Peterson Air Force Base (AFB)**. The assessment will start in August 2020 and focus on a random selection of households served by the drinking water systems of Security Water District (WD), Security Mobile Home Park (MHP), and the western portion of the Widefield Water and Sanitation District (WSD).

As part of this assessment, we will recruit participants and conduct blood and urine testing for PFAS. You may be invited to participate in this exposure assessment. This fact sheet explains the exposure assessment process, including how we recruit, test, and provide results.

Goal of this Exposure Assessment

The results of this exposure assessment will help individual participants and their communities better understand their exposure to PFAS and may provide information that the communities can use to reduce PFAS exposure. It will add new information to PFAS testing already done in this area.

Your participation is important because without sufficient participation, our ability to answer questions and provide useful information about PFAS exposure is limited. The exposure assessment will produce information that can be used by public health professionals across the nation to help communities impacted by PFAS. An exposure assessment does not look at what types of health problems the exposure might cause. We will not be able to tell you if the PFAS levels in your blood or urine will make you sick now or later in life.

Recruiting Participants for this Assessment

CDC/ATSDR has identified a random selection of households exposed to PFAS in their drinking water above the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) current health advisory level. This includes residents within the Security-Widefield area served by public drinking water systems. Choosing a random selection of households to participate will help estimate exposure for all community members, even those not selected to participate.

EXPOSURE ASSESSMENT



The process of finding out how people come into contact with a hazardous substance, how often and for how long they are in contact with the substance, and how much of the substance they are in contact with.

Eligibility Criteria

All individuals living in selected households are eligible to participate if they:



- Are 3 years of age or older (children will be included in the exposure assessment only if we have consent from a parent or legal guardian)



- Do not have a bleeding disorder and are not anemic



- Have lived in the sampling area for at least one year **before November 10, 2016**.



National Center
for Environmental Health
Agency for Toxic Substances
and Disease Registry



Recruitment Process

If your household is selected to participate in the exposure assessment:

- We will send you a letter explaining the exposure assessment and registration process.
- **Please call CDC/ATSDR at the number on the letter to let us know whether or not you and other household members would like to participate.**
- A CDC/ATSDR representative may call you or visit your home to answer your questions and help register you and other members of your household.
- If you choose to participate, we will help you schedule an appointment.

We will begin the exposure assessment in August 2020. Recruitment lasts about five weeks, and then we will be in El Paso County for approximately two weeks for testing.

We are implementing additional health and safety precautions to minimize the risk of transmission of COVID-19 when conducting the exposure assessment.



Sampling, Analyzing, and Reporting Results

If you participate in the exposure assessment:

- You will go to a testing site in the Security-Widefield area where we will take a blood and urine sample.
- Over the phone, you will answer a questionnaire about yourself, your health, and your possible exposure to PFAS through water, food, and your environment.

- CDC laboratories will analyze the blood and urine samples for PFAS only, according to guidelines established by CDC/ATSDR.
- CDC/ATSDR will mail you the test results; this may take several months.

We will also collect drinking water and indoor dust samples from the homes of some participants.



CDC/ATSDR will review all the results and write a report describing the findings. We will then share results with the community.

For More Information

El Paso County Exposure Assessment:

- Visit <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/activities/assessments.html>
- Contact Chris Maniglier-Poulet, ATSDR Region 8 at cgp8@cdc.gov or (303) 312-7013

Security Water District (WD):

- Visit www.securitywdsd.com or call (719) 392-3475

Widefield Water and Sanitation District (WSD):

- Visit www.wwsdonline.com or call (719) 390-7111

El Paso County Health Department:

- Visit www.elpasocountyhealth.org or call (719) 578-3199

Colorado State Department of Public Health and Environment:

- Visit www.colorado.gov/cdphe or call (303) 692-2000

CDC/ATSDR's PFAS work, visit www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas

Background Information: PFAS Near Peterson AFB

Use and spills of aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) containing PFAS occurred at the Peterson Air Force Base primarily during firefighting training exercises. The PFAS traveled into the groundwater eventually affecting nearby water systems in El Paso County, CO.

Testing in 2013 and 2014 found PFAS in the Widefield WSD. PFAS were first detected in the Security WD and Security MHP in 2014 and 2016, respectively. These three drinking water systems had customers with sustained PFAS exposures greater than the current EPA health advisory. In 2016, all three systems took active measures to reduce PFAS exposure to customers. Based on information available to the ATSDR, drinking water supplies from all three systems currently meet federal PFAS guidelines.

In 2018, a health study, PFAS Assessment of Water and Resident Exposure (PFAS-AWARE), tested PFAS levels in approximately 200 people in El Paso County. Some were retested in 2019. Information can be found online at pfas-aware.org. ATSDR's exposure assessment is different from the earlier study. The exposure assessment will help public health professionals better understand the overall PFAS exposure in your community (not just for those who participate) and may provide information to help communities across the nation. The exposure assessment will also test children older than 3 years old; the PFAS-AWARE study was limited to adults. You can participate in the exposure assessment even if you participated in the PFAS-AWARE study.

