



FACT SHEET

Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

Preliminary Assessment/Site Investigation at Waiawa Unit Training and Equipment Site (UTES)

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The Army National Guard (ARNG) is investigating potential releases of certain per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances, commonly known as PFAS. These substances may be present in soil and/or groundwater at ARNG installations from PFAS-containing aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) or from other sources. Military use of AFFF began in the 1970s and was most widely used at installations with airfields. The primary potential sources of ARNG PFAS releases are firefighting training areas where AFFF was used to train firefighters to respond to petroleum fires. Other ARNG potential uses of PFAS were in industrial processes, such as metal plating. However, there are also many potential non-DoD sources of PFAS. These chemicals may enter the environment through landfills and wastewater due to their presence in consumer products or as runoff to soil and water from other uses.

Background

- PFAS refers to a class of man-made chemicals in commerce including perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorobutanesulfonic acid (PFBS), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), and hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid (HFPO-DA or GenX).
- PFOA and PFOS are the most extensively studied and, historically, the most widely-used throughout the U.S.
- Beginning in the 1950s, common uses of these substances included numerous heat-, stain-, grease- and water-resistant products, such as carpets, clothing, upholstery fabrics, paper packaging for food, and cookware.
- In May 2016, the EPA established lifetime health advisory levels (HAs) for PFOS and PFOA in drinking water. HAs were established for PFBS and GenX in June 2022. HAs are concentrations that should offer a margin of protection for all Americans throughout their life from adverse health effects resulting from exposure.
- the CERCLA process to fully investigate releases, prioritize responses, and determine appropriate cleanup actions based on risk.
- The CERCLA process as provided in 42 United States Code Chapter 103 includes multiple phases: Preliminary Assessment, Site Inspection, Remedial Investigation, Feasibility Study, Remedial Design/Remedial Action, Remedial Action-Construction/Remedial Action-Operations, and Long Term Management. Each of these phases can take several years to complete. The first two phases are described below.
- **Preliminary Assessment (PA).** The PA is an initial review and analysis of available information to determine whether a release may have occurred and the potential sources and type of release(s). It includes an evaluation of a site's relative risk and recommendations on need for subsequent phases in the cleanup process or no further action.

PROCESS:

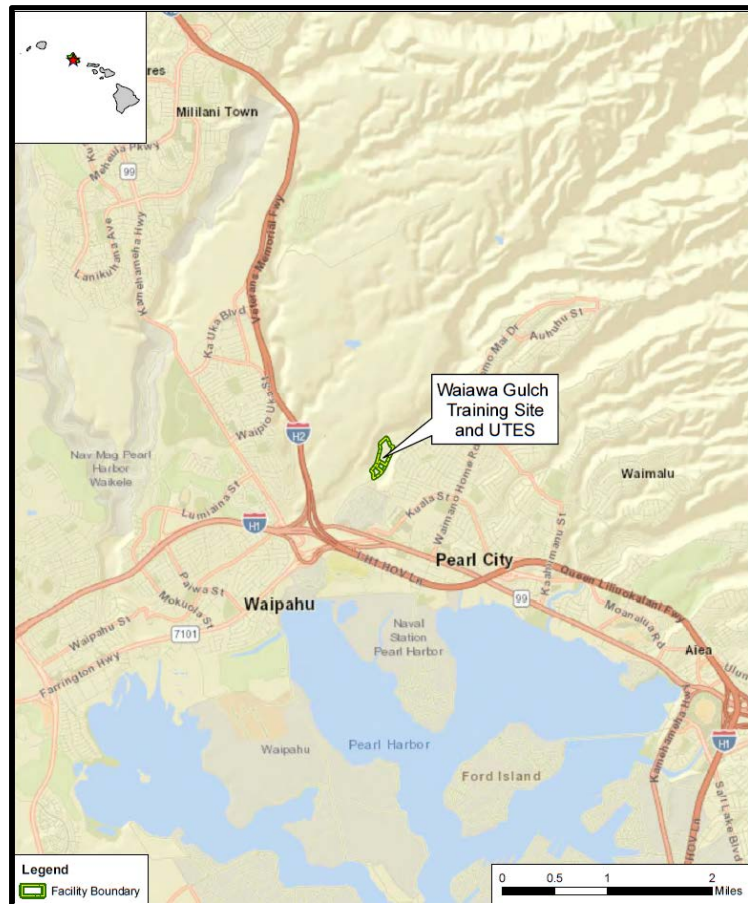
- ARNG's priority is to quickly address PFOS, PFOA, PFBS, and GenX (when warranted) in drinking water from ARNG activities, and to address releases of these compounds under federal cleanup law (i.e., the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA)). Army follows
- **Site Inspection (SI).** The SI characterizes the site and sources, determines likelihood of release of these PFAS compounds to various media (e.g. groundwater, surface water, or soil), estimates the receptors actually or potentially exposed, and determines what additional action, if any, is appropriate.

ARNG Activities at Waiawa UTES

- The ARNG has completed a PA, and is in the process of completing an SI, to determine whether a release of PFAS may have occurred and to identify potential sources and types of release.
- The ARNG has identified 2 sites at Waiawa UTES where PFAS releases occurred or are suspected to have occurred. This includes the Firetruck Pump Test Area and the Firetruck Parking Area, Vehicle Maintenance Area, and Storage Buildings. A description of each of the sites and sampling results can be found below.
- The Firetruck Pump Test Area in the northern portion of the facility is a grassy area used for vehicle storage and for pump testing of a firetruck.
- The southern portion of the facility includes the vehicle maintenance area and surrounding areas where AFFF was discharged from the facility firetruck in the early 2000s, the grassy firetruck parking area, and the storage buildings on the edge of the grassy area where AFFF has been stored.

Army Next Steps:

- Out an abundance of caution, the ARNG will investigate drinking water wells near the Waiawa UTES facility in the direction of groundwater flow.
- The AARNG is finalizing the SI report and begin a Remedial Investigation in 2023 to determine the extent of contamination.
- ARNG installations, nationwide, no longer use AFFF for maintenance, testing, or training. AFFF can be used only in cases of fire emergencies, and the ARNG inventory of AFFF will be replaced with DoD approved safer options in compliance with Army guidance.
- ARNG will continue to identify and dispose of old formulations of AFFF containing PFOA/PFOS at Army installations, and no longer uses AFFF for maintenance, testing, or training. AFFF is now only used for fire emergencies.



WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION

Army PFAS website: <https://www.denix.osd.mil/army-pfas/home/>