

The Changing Nature of Fire-Fighting Foams

Understanding the risk posed by PFAS



What are AFFF?

Aqueous Film-Forming Foams (AFFF) are used in fighting Class B flammable liquid fires. We can broadly group them into two categories:



Fluorine Free

Those that are fluorine free (referred to as **F3** or **FFF**).

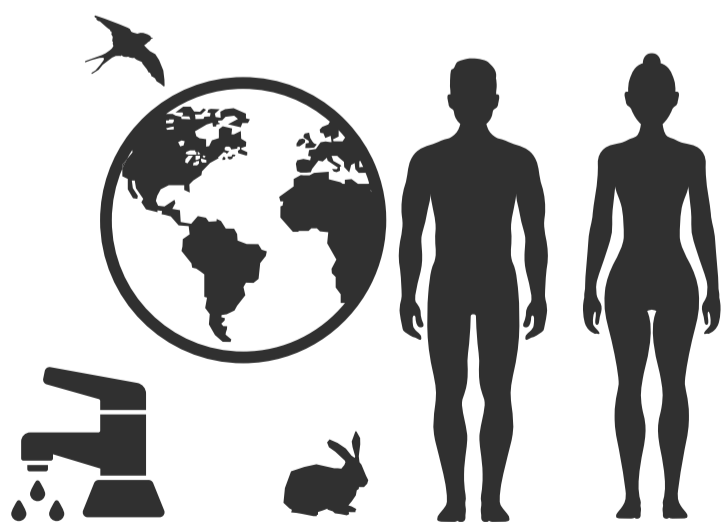


Contain Fluorine

Foam that contains fluorine (F) chemicals; these are a broad range of chemical substances called PFAS (Per- and Poly-FluoroAlkylated Substances), including **C8** (PFOS & PFOA) and **C6** (PFHxA and PFHxS) fluorosurfactants.

Is fluorine harmful?

- ① Many PFAS are proven to **cause environmental and human health impacts**. Others are suspected of posing risks and nothing is known about many others.
- ① **Living organisms (including humans) can absorb PFAS into their bodies** which can interfere with the hormonal system, the immune system, impact the reproductive system, and are possibly carcinogenic.
- ① PFAS break down very slowly, if at all, in the environment. **Many PFAS dissolve in water**, meaning they can end up in waterways if AFFF is discharged.



If you use AFFF, these are the key messages for you...

- ① **Follow the current restrictions on AFFFs containing PFOA**
- ① **Limit the use of AFFFs that contain any other PFAS**
- ① **Purchase suitable replacement foams that are free of PFAS**
- ① **Prepare for the future**

FURTHER INFORMATION

The EPA hosts a website - www.pops.ie. Here you will find the booklet *The Changing Nature of Fire-Fighting Foams (Understanding the Risk Posed by PFAS)*. This site also contains very useful information on POPS, PFAS, the known composition of particular brands of AFFF, whether fluorine-free or not, and any updates on restrictions. To avail of a derogation that will allow you to continue to use AFFF containing PFOA for a limited period and to satisfy your reporting obligations contact the EPA via email: pops@epa.ie

FIRE FIGHTING FOAMS & YOU



Do you understand the risk posed by PFAS and the changing nature of fire-fighting foams?



**Download our
Guidance Booklet
today and make
sure you and your
staff are safe and
ready.
www.pops.ie**

All those involved in the purchase, management, use and disposal of foams need to be aware of the legal obligations related to PFAS-containing foams.

This booklet contains information on PFAS-containing AFFF for users, suppliers and waste operators including:

- **Current regulations and requirements**
- **Identifying PFAS foams**
- **Storage & use**
- **Disposal**
- **Replacement of PFAS foams**