

# Firefighting Foam & PFAS in Wisconsin

PFAS (perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are a group of synthetic chemicals used in industry and consumer products worldwide since the 1950s. They do not break down in the environment for extremely long periods of time and they accumulate in the human body. Exposure to certain PFAS substances may cause adverse health effects. For the purpose of this document, the terms 'PFAS foam' and 'PFAS-containing foam' mean 'foam with intentionally added PFAS.'

Some firefighting foams currently used to extinguish Class B and A/B (flammable liquid) fires include intentionally added PFAS. Effective Sept. 1, 2020, state law limits when these foams can be used to ensure protection of human health and the environment. (See 2019 Wisconsin Act 101 and Wis. Stat. § 299.48.) The DNR has been directed to promulgate emergency and permanent rules on this topic.

## When PFAS Foams Can & Cannot Be Used



### PROHIBITED:

**TRAINING** with foams that include intentionally added PFAS is prohibited by law effective Sept. 1, 2020. On this date, the following exemptions and requirements apply:

### ALLOWED:



- PFAS-containing foams **CAN BE USED** for **EMERGENCY** firefighting & fire prevention operations.

- » Take measures to prevent discharge into lakes, streams, rivers & sewers, per NR 708.
- » Safety Data Sheets from the foam manufacturer must be acquired, retained & available.



- PFAS-containing foams **CAN BE USED** for **TESTING** purposes.

- » Testing facilities must contain, store, treat & dispose of foam appropriately.
- » **Flushing or draining foam into storm or sanitary sewers is PROHIBITED.**

When PFAS foam is discharged to the environment, immediately call\* the **24-hour Emergency Hotline:**

**1-800-943-0003**

\*Without hindering firefighting or fire prevention operations.

## WHEN PFAS-CONTAINING FOAM IS USED FOR EMERGENCIES OR TESTING

### Storage

Use **secondary containment** when **storing foam**. Even small leaks can cause environmental impacts.



### Emergencies

Work with the DNR and responsible parties to **contain** deployed foam, **limit** environmental impacts to the extent practicable, and **immediately report the discharge.**



### Disposal

Develop a disposal plan for foam containers and recovered foam solutions with **environmental and hazardous waste disposal contractors.**



## SAFEGUARDING WISCONSIN'S COMMUNITIES & NATURAL RESOURCES