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EPA Administrator Regan Announces Comprehensive National Strategy to Confront PFAS Pollution

October 18, 2021

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WASHINGTON (Oct. 18, 2021) – Today U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Michael S. Regan announced the agency’s comprehensive Strategic Roadmap to confront PFAS contamination nationwide. The Roadmap is the result of a thorough analysis conducted by the EPA Council on PFAS that Administrator Regan established in April 2021. EPA’s Roadmap is centered on three guiding strategies: Increase investments in research, leverage authorities to take action now to restrict PFAS chemicals from being released into the environment, and accelerate the cleanup of PFAS contamination. North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper and other elected leaders will join Administrator Regan at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, NC, for the announcement.

“For far too long, families across America – especially those in underserved communities – have suffered from PFAS in their water, their air, or in the land their children play on,” **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan.** “This comprehensive, national PFAS strategy will deliver protections to people who are hurting, by advancing

bold and concrete actions that address the full lifecycle of these chemicals. Let there be no doubt that EPA is listening, we have your back, and we are laser focused on protecting people from pollution and holding polluters accountable.”

"This roadmap commits the EPA to quickly setting enforceable drinking water limits for these chemicals as well as giving stronger tools to communities to protect people's health and the environment," **said North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper**. "As we continue partnering with the EPA on this and other important efforts, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal and the larger budget resolution would provide critical help by dedicating significant resources to address PFAS contamination."

The Strategic Roadmap delivers on the agency's mission to protect public health and the environment and answers the call for action on these persistent and dangerous chemicals. Today, alongside the release of the Roadmap, the agency is announcing a new national testing strategy that requires PFAS manufacturers to provide the agency with toxicity data and information on categories of PFAS chemicals. The PFAS to be tested will be selected based on an approach that breaks the large number of PFAS today into smaller categories based on similar features and considers what existing data are available for each category. EPA's initial set of test orders for PFAS, which are expected in a matter of months, will be strategically selected from more than 20 different categories of PFAS. This set of orders will provide the agency with critical information on more than 2,000 other similar PFAS that fall within these categories.

The Roadmap lays out:

- Aggressive timelines to set **enforceable drinking water limits** under the Safe Drinking Water Act to ensure water is safe to drink in every community.
- **A hazardous substance designation** under CERCLA, to strengthen the ability to hold polluters financially accountable.
- Timelines for action—whether it is data collection or rulemaking—on **Effluent Guideline Limitations under the Clean Water Act for nine industrial categories**.
- **A review of past actions on PFAS taken under the Toxic Substances Control Act** to address those that are insufficiently protective.
- Increased **monitoring, data collection and research** so that the agency can identify what actions are needed and when to take them.

- A final **toxicity assessment for GenX**, which can be used to develop health advisories that will help communities make informed decisions to better protect human health and ecological wellness.
- Continued efforts to build the **technical foundation needed on PFAS air emissions** to inform future actions under the Clean Air Act.

“I’m encouraged that EPA is giving this urgent public health threat the attention and seriousness it deserves,” **said Senator Tom Carper**. “This is truly a soup-to-nuts plan—one that commits to cleaning up PFAS in our environment while also putting protections in place to prevent more of these forever chemicals from finding their way into our lives. After the previous administration failed to follow through on its plan to address PFAS contamination, EPA’s new leadership promised action. I look forward to working with them on living up to this commitment.”

“Communities contaminated by these toxic forever chemicals have waited decades for action,” **said Ken Cook, President of the Environmental Working Group**. “So, it’s good news that Administrator Regan will fulfill President Biden’s pledge to take quick action to reduce PFOA and PFOS in tap water, to restrict industrial releases of PFAS into the air and water, and to designate PFOA and PFOS as hazardous substances to hold polluters accountable. It’s been more than 20 years since EPA and EWG first learned that these toxic forever chemicals were building up in our blood and increasing our likelihood of cancer and other health harms. It’s time for action, not more plans, and that’s what this Administrator will deliver. As significant as these actions are, they are just the first of many actions needed to protect us from PFAS, as the Administrator has said.”

EPA’s Strategic Roadmap is a critical step forward in addressing PFAS pollution. Every level of government – from local, to state, to Tribal, to federal will need to exercise increased and sustained leadership to continue the momentum and make progress on PFAS. President Biden has called for more than \$10 billion in funding to address PFAS contamination through his Build Back Better agenda and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal. These critical resources will enable EPA and other federal agencies to scale up the research and work, so that they meet the scale of the PFAS challenge.

Over the coming weeks, EPA will be working to partner for progress on PFAS. The agency will be engaging with a wide range of stakeholders to continue to identify collaborative solutions to the PFAS challenge, including two national webinars that will

be held on October 26 and November 2. Please RSVP to the webinars using the hyperlinked dates.

Background

In April 2021, Administrator Regan established the EPA Council on PFAS to address the dangerous impacts of PFAS contamination and meet the needs of EPA's partners and communities across the United States. To date, under the Biden-Harris Administration, EPA has:

- Launched a national PFAS testing strategy.
- Restarted rule development process for designating PFOA and PFOS as CERCLA hazardous substances.
- Built momentum to set national primary drinking water standard for PFOA and PFOS,
- Announced actions to stop companies from dumping PFAS into America's waterways.
- Formed a workgroup to champion regulating PFAS as categories.
- Proposed a rule to expand data collection efforts on PFAS.
- Started planning to conduct expanded nationwide monitoring for PFAS in drinking water.
- Announced robust review process for new PFAS.
- Released preliminary Toxics Release Inventory data on PFAS.
- Updated a toxicity assessment for PFBS after rigorous scientific review.
- Released a draft PFBA toxicity assessment for public comment and external peer review.

Additional information on the Strategic Roadmap: www.epa.gov/pfas

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LAST UPDATED ON OCTOBER 18, 2021