

Air Force Press Release



Air Force Civil Engineer Center
Office of Public Affairs
2261 Hughes Ave, Ste 155
Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland TX 78236-9853
(210) 925-0956 afcec.pa@us.af.mil
www.afcec.af.mil



Release No. 20170721
Date: July 21, 2017

Air Force continues attack on PFOS/PFOA issues at Pease

By Scott Johnston, AFCEC Public Affairs

Since 2014, the United States Air Force has spent more than \$25 million to address the perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanoic sulfonate (PFOS) contamination in drinking water at the former Pease Air Force Base in Portsmouth, NH.

The PFOS/PFOA impact was first identified during Air Force remediation activities in the northern portion of Pease in a former fire training area referred to as Site 8.

The Air Force confirmed the presence of PFOS/PFOA at the former fire training area and sampled the Haven well, a drinking water well on the Pease airfield more than a mile away. It was found to contain levels above the provisional health advisory and was shut down in May 2014. The Haven well will remain offline until a new water treatment system, funded by the Air Force, is brought online by the City of Portsmouth.

The Air Force spent approximately \$15 million on the initial response and investigation in Newington and on the Pease Tradeport, and has spent nearly \$10 million on the design and construction of the three separate interim mitigation systems.

Moving forward, the Air Force expects to spend an additional \$30 million in 2017, including \$13 million for construction of a groundwater treatment system to mitigate PFOS/PFOA impacts on the Haven drinking water well.

“The Air Force is committed to the protection of human health and the environment. We are doing everything necessary to find the releases or potential releases of PFOS and PFOA at Pease,” said Peter Forbes, Air Force Environmental Project Manager at Pease. “Protecting the Portsmouth community is our priority. We have been working with the city, state and other health authorities to ensure PFOS and PFOA from the Air Force’s historic use of fire-fighting foam are not impacting drinking water sources.”

While all necessary actions have been taken to ensure drinking water is safe from PFOS and PFOA, the Air Force is now taking additional actions to identify PFOS/PFOA impacts at Pease. This includes performing further investigations to delineate PFOS/PFOA in groundwater deep beneath Pease. It also includes taking a closer look at four areas in need of further study: the former fire training area, former crash fire station, the KC-135 aircraft fire response area and firefighting equipment-testing area.

In the meantime, the Air Force will continue to monitor wells in the vicinity of the PFOS/PFOA plume to ensure the levels are below the EPA Lifetime Health Advisory.

Air Force actions since 2014:

- The Air Force installed and is maintaining home drinking water treatment systems at four homes in Newington with private drinking wells with PFOS/PFOA detected above EPA's health advisory.
- The Air Force continues to sample other residences within one mile of the former base that may be impacted by the AF's PFOS/PFOA releases.
- The Air Force continues to monitor the Harrison and Smith public water supply wells located to the south of the former base. Sampling data collected since April 2014 shows very consistent concentrations of PFOS/PFOA, no discernible plume movement and no EPA health advisory exceedance. This routine monitoring confirms there is no immediate threat to these wells and continued monitoring will ensure that does not change.
- The Air Force plans to start up a groundwater treatment system to mitigate PFOS/PFOA impacts to private drinking wells in Newington, on the north end of the former base by January 2018.
- The Air Force has completed fieldwork for the base-wide site inspection to identify and confirm sites with historic PFOS/PFOA releases and the EPA recently approved the report summarizing this work.
- Development of the Air Force groundwater treatment system to intercept contamination before reaching the Haven well is progressing in cooperation with the Pease Development Authority. The Air Force is working with EPA to firm up the construction and activation schedule.
- The Air Force is negotiating another Environmental Services Cooperative Agreement with the City of Portsmouth to provide more than one million dollars toward the design of a treatment system to mitigate PFOS/PFOA impacts to drinking water produced from the Haven well. The Air Force also plans to provide funds for the construction of that treatment system.
- In April 2016, the Air Force formed a Restoration Advisory Board. The board is made up of representatives from the local community, the Air Force, and state and federal regulatory agencies. The board meetings provide an opportunity for the Air Force and regulatory agencies to inform the public about the status of restoration activities, address concerns, and receive inputs from the community on proposed actions. The next RAB is scheduled for July 26, 2017.

By the end of 2017, the Air Force will have accomplished \$55 million worth of actions to ensure protection of drinking water at Pease from PFOS and PFOA. Close coordination with the City of Portsmouth, the local residents and environmental regulatory agencies have all contributed to the ability to accomplish so many actions in just three years.