

## **PFAS - A NEW Challenge for Environmental Due Diligence**

### *Part 3: The Global Presence of PFAS Compounds*

#### **How are Regulators Worldwide Responding to PFAS Risks?**

As mentioned in [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) of EnviroSouth's series on PFAS ("Forever Chemicals"), these compounds have been widely used in manufacturing processes beginning in the 1950s. Presently, many of these compounds remain in use as additives to a variety of everyday commercial and household products. Based on the toxicity of these compounds and the widespread exposure to human populations, the EPA has now established drinking water standards for a select group of PFAS chemicals while also naming two (2) of those chemicals as hazardous substances.

The EPA has indicated the new regulations in effect as of June and July 2024 are meant to target the generation and handling of these substances at an industrial level while protecting the nation's water supplies. Studies indicate the [ubiquitous use of PFAS](#) across the globe has impacted [rainwater](#), [surface water, soil](#), and has even been observed in [Antarctic ice](#).

#### **How Pervasive is the Use of Forever Chemicals?**

Since the 1950s, the use of PFAS has grown exponentially. These compounds have a near endless degree of uses and are easily integrated into consumer goods. Now that toxicological studies have indicated there is a significant risk to human health, environmental regulators are responding to mitigate exposure.

In the United States, many states have conducted their own studies evaluating public waterways to evaluate surface waters, sediments, and wildlife for concentrations of select PFAS compounds. The results of those studies indicate that nearly all sampled media contained concentrations of PFAS compounds with many of those concentrations observed over federal regulatory limits. In many cases, the presence of PFAS can be attributable to off-site industrial operations which have impacted environmental media via exposure pathways such as rainwater and stormwater runoff. For an example of a study performed by a state regulatory agency, please click [HERE](#) to review the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES; formerly the SCDHEC) PFAS Mapping Tool.

#### **How can EnviroSouth help you?**

Given the [ubiquitous use of PFAS](#), the presence of forever chemicals in the soil and groundwater on a particular property may exist regardless of the property's history. However, as with every challenge, there are several practical options for overcoming these issues. Our organization is committed to assisting our clients with navigating this latest "speed bump" in environmental due diligence. EnviroSouth is prepared to explain the technical and regulatory situation to buyers, sellers, and their lenders. This assistance will be critical to prevent PFAS concerns from derailing future property transactions.