



FIRE DEPARTMENT SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Bulletin #21, Calling All Aqueous Film Forming (AFFF) Foams Out, April 30, 2021

- Don't dump fluorinated (AFFF) firefighting foams into a storm drain, the sewer or landfills¹
- Don't sell or give away fluorinated AFFF or AR-AFFF to other fire departments
- Do not send it to a training site or a fire academy to use!
- Do determine your department's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on firefighting foams
- Store AFFF and AR-ARFF foams safely until you can receive direction from your state Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Department of Natural Resources (DNR) or State Fire Marshal. These products must be stored safely for pick-up and proper disposal. Protect your firefighters, your fire department and the community.

In Michigan, during 2019, AFFF was picked up statewide. "US Ecology's contract was based on the estimated 37,000 gallons of Class B AFFF reported out in the AFFF survey. When the collection program ended on September 30, 2020, US Ecology had picked up 51,404 gallons of AFFF."¹

Nigel Holmes of the Queensland Incident Response Unit, Department of Environment & Science reports:

"PFAS passes straight through sewage treatment plants to effluent, rivers, drinking water and PFAS that end up in sludge biosolids that are used in compost and food production. Landfills are just as bad, landfill liners only last 60-200 years and so the PFAS that persist for 1000s of years will get out directly to groundwater and as volatiles in gases."²

Firefighters have been contaminating their own communities with these chemicals unknowingly. PFAS will go anywhere that water goes. Even one application can be problematic. The Foam Exposure Committee recommends that fire departments choose a fluorine-free firefighting foam. There are fluorine-free foams that have third party fire testing and are completely workable now.

¹ Collection and Disposal Program, accessed 04 01 2021, <https://www.michigan.gov/pfasresponse/0,9038,7-365-86514-496805--,00.html>

² Nigel Holmes, Principal Advisor Incident Management, Central Queensland, Incident Response Unit | Environmental Services & Regulations, Queensland Department of Environment and Science, e-mail of Mar 28, 2021



A central Illinois fire department kept a spray bottle of mixed C6 / AFFF solution on the fire apparatus for small incidents. If AFFF product is put into unlabeled containers, this can cause issues for the fire department.

Fire chiefs could consider reviewing past fire records that used PFAS containing firefighting foams. One Wisconsin fire chief – on his own – was going to go back 20 years into fire reports to review incident calls that had used fluorinated firefighting foams.