



Naval Support Activity (NSA) Northwest Annex Chesapeake, VA and Currituck County, NC PFAS Drinking Water Investigation Fact Sheet

February 2019

The Navy is requesting permission to sample drinking water obtained from private wells within a designated area near NSA Northwest Annex.

INTRODUCTION

The Navy is requesting permission to sample drinking water obtained from private wells within designated areas near the Naval Support Activity (NSA) Northwest Annex, located in Chesapeake, Virginia and Currituck County, North Carolina (Figure 1). The Navy has developed a proactive policy to address past releases of perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), two types of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances, commonly known as PFAS. These substances may be present in the soil and/or groundwater at Navy sites as a result of historical firefighting activities using aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) (commonly referred to as firefighting foam), including equipment testing and training.

PFOS and PFOA have been detected in certain groundwater locations at the NSA Northwest Annex. In an abundance of caution, the Navy is initiating an investigation of off-base drinking water wells within these designated areas (Figure 2) to identify and address possible current exposure to PFAS in drinking water. The Navy has identified several private drinking water wells within the designated areas. We are seeking the public's assistance to identify any additional drinking water wells located in the shaded areas depicted on Figure 2. There is no legal requirement to conduct drinking water testing. It is a voluntary measure because water quality for our off-base neighbors is a priority for the Navy.

The Navy is performing this drinking water sampling in coordination with its partners, including Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) Region 3 and Region 4, United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ), Virginia Department of Health (Chesapeake Health District) and the City of Chesapeake.



Figure 1- NSA Northwest Annex

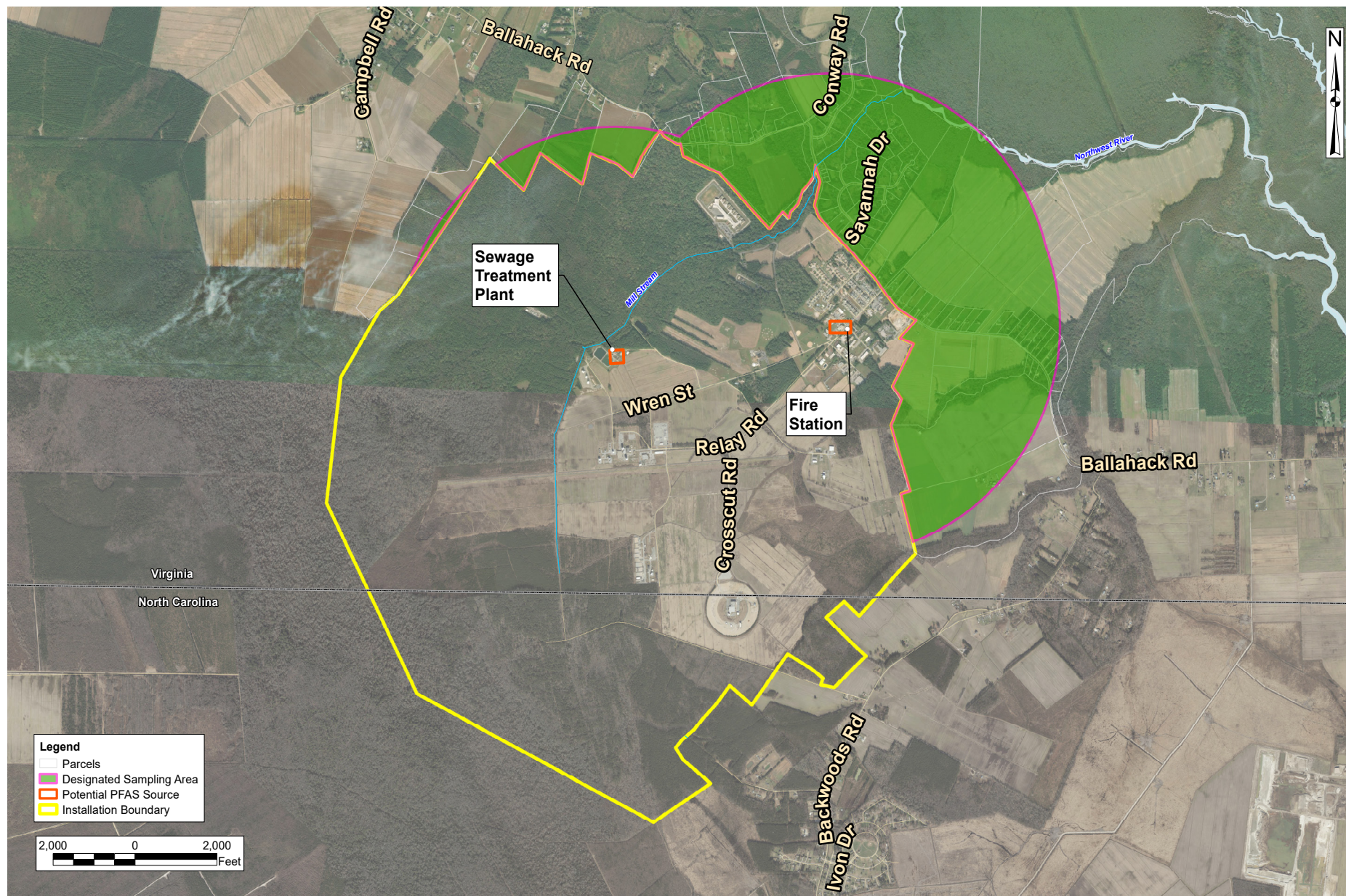
BACKGROUND

PFAS are man-made chemicals that have been used since the 1950s in many household and industrial products because of their stain- and water-repellant properties. PFAS are now present virtually everywhere in the world because of the large amounts that have been manufactured and used. Once these compounds are released to the environment, they break down very slowly.

PFAS are "emerging" contaminants, which have no Safe Drinking Water Act regulatory standards or routine water quality testing requirements. The U.S. Environmental

If preliminary results show that drinking water from your private well contains PFOS and/or PFOA above the EPA lifetime health advisory, then the Navy will provide bottled water for drinking or cooking until a long-term solution is implemented.

Figure 2- Designated Private Well Sampling Area



Protection Agency (EPA) is currently studying certain PFAS to determine if regulation is needed. In May 2016, the EPA released lifetime health advisory levels for two PFAS, specifically PFOS and PFOA. Health advisory levels are not regulatory standards. They are levels that would provide Americans, including the most sensitive populations, with a margin of protection from a lifetime of exposure to PFOS and PFOA in drinking water. The EPA's health advisory level for lifetime exposure is 70 parts per trillion (ppt) for PFOS and 70 ppt for PFOA. When both PFOS and PFOA are found in drinking water, the combined concentrations should not exceed 70 ppt.

NAVY POLICY

Until a decision for regulating PFAS is made, the Navy has proactively developed a policy to ensure drinking water is not impacted by PFOS and/or PFOA near installations where there has been a nearby known or suspected release of PFAS to the environment. Navy policy is to sample drinking water sources downgradient (in the direction of groundwater flow) from a known or suspected release of PFAS. To ensure protectiveness, the Navy will offer this drinking water sampling to all residents in the designated area (Figure 2). The Navy is requesting permission to sample to ensure our neighbors are not being exposed to PFOS and/or PFOA in their drinking water at concentrations exceeding the EPA's lifetime health advisory.

Due to known concentrations of PFAS in groundwater at NSA Northwest Annex, there is a potential that PFOS and/or PFOA has migrated off-base in groundwater. The Navy's priority is to determine if PFOS and/or PFOA are present in the drinking water of nearby residents and, if so, also taking appropriate action. Once any potential exposures from drinking water have been addressed, the Navy will complete an investigation to determine the extent of these compounds at the NSA Northwest Annex.

ACTIONS BASED ON RESULTS

The preliminary results from the off-base drinking water sampling are expected approximately 2 weeks after collecting the samples. We will provide notification to the

property owners of their personal drinking water results and follow-up actions if needed. The Navy will do its best to keep the results of individual properties confidential to the extent permitted by law.

The Navy will provide an alternate water source, bottled water, for drinking and cooking to any residents in the sampling area whose water contains PFOS and/or PFOA above the EPA's health advisory levels. The Navy will continue to provide the alternate water until a permanent solution is implemented.

HEALTH INFORMATION

Exposure to PFOS and PFOA appears to be global. Studies have found both compounds in the blood samples of the general population. Studies on exposed populations indicate that PFOS and/or PFOA may have caused elevated cholesterol levels and possibly low infant birth weight. In studies conducted using laboratory animals, effects on developmental, neurological, immune, thyroid, and liver function were observed.

Health effects from exposure to low levels of PFAS are not well known and studies are continuing. At this time, it is not possible to link exposures to PFOS and/or PFOA to a person's individual health issues. Blood tests are available to measure these chemicals, but they are not routinely done because the results can be inconclusive and test results do not predict health effects. Long-term exposure effects are still being investigated by the EPA.

Based on what is known and still unknown about PFOS and PFOA, EPA recommends people not drink or cook with water that contains these compounds above the EPA's lifetime health advisory.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.cnic.navy.mil/NWADrinkingWaterInfo>

If you have specific questions, contact the Navy Public Affairs office at:

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