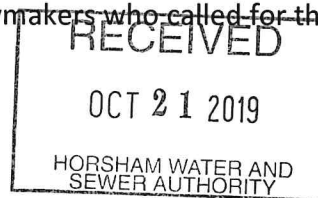


Defense Department To Investigate PFAS Use At Bases

U.S. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, of Bucks County, was among the lawmakers who called for the study of the hazardous chemicals' use.

By Doug Gross, Patch Staff
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The U.S. Department of Defense will be reviewing the continued use of PFAS at military sites after receiving a call to do so from lawmakers, including the congressman from Bucks County.

In July, the bipartisan Congressional PFAS Task Force sent a letter to the Defense Department's inspector general, asking the office to examine the department's use of the potentially hazardous chemicals.

That task force is co-chaired by Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, who represents Bucks County in Congress.

Now, the office has responded that it will be launching a review of the Department of Defense's use of PFAS at military sites around the country.

"It is unacceptable that the Defense Department put the health of Pennsylvania families at risk with these chemicals, whether it was intended or unintended," Fitzpatrick said in a news release. "Every American has a right to clean drinking water. The federal government created this health crisis and it is important that the government is starting to take responsibility.

"I'm happy to see that the inspector general will be further reviewing this issue and look forward to seeing their report."

In Montgomery and Bucks counties, PFAS are believed to have entered the water supply through a firefighting foam used on the now-closed Willow Grove Naval Air Station in Horsham.

A 2019 Department of Health report determined that PFAS have contaminated 17 sites across Pennsylvania. Studies have linked PFAS to child development problems, elevated cholesterol levels, issues with pregnancy and certain types of cancer, researchers say.

The inspector general's investigation comes amid a renewed push for answers about the dangers that the chemicals could be causing.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry has launched a nationwide study on PFAS, naming the Bucks/Montgomery area as one of seven sites for the study.

Locally, Temple University researchers will be specifically looking into links between PFAS and cancer.