

# The Intelligencer

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## Navy responds to questions about soil contaminated with PFAS

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HORSHAM WATER AND  
SEWER AUTHORITY

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The landfill in Deerfield Township is operated by the Cumberland County Improvement Authority, which last week rescinded its approval of a previous agreement to accept up to 4,500 tons of the soil.

The soil is contaminated with PFAS, a class of toxic chemicals, some of which were ingredients in firefighting foams used for decades in training exercises and emergencies at the Horsham base, and later found in nearby groundwater, surface water and drinking water.

The chemicals are unregulated and there are no requirements for cleanup or disposal, or widely established advisory levels except for in drinking water.

In a response to questions last week from this news organization, Willie Lin, environmental coordinator for the Navy, said the Navy consulted with the Environmental Protection Agency and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection before it removed soil from the base that contained more than 1,027 parts per billion of two of the chemicals, PFOA and PFOS, combined.

Lin said the Navy sampled and characterized the soil and provided the information to the agencies and the landfill, and received EPA approval to dispose of it there.

“All applicable regulations were followed to characterize the soils,” Lin said, adding that it does not meet the definition of hazardous waste. “Despite EPA’s approval and Navy compliance with all applicable regulations, (the improvement authority) has decided it will no longer accept the soil.”

The soil currently is stockpiled and covered at the base, Lin said, and it may take the Navy several weeks to dispose of it at another facility.

“Navy is currently reviewing its options for disposal of this soil with the goal of not incurring additional cost to the taxpayer,” Lin added. “The Navy remains focused on ensuring that drinking water in the communities impacted by historical use of PFAS at the former NASJRB Willow Grove, and other locations, complies with the EPA’s lifetime health advisory levels for PFOS and PFOA. The Navy will continue to proactively address this issue with the EPA and the PADEP.”