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WATERSHED WATCH

ST. MARY'S RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
PO Box 94
St. Mary's City, MD 20686

February 27, 2020

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INSIDE THIS EDITION

>>PFAS Pollution Threatens Fish

SAVE-THE-DATE

A River Affair

Monday, May 25, 2020

1 to 4 pm

Ruddy Duck Seafood & Alehouse

[Purchase Tickets](#)



Navy Alerts Public to PFAS Pollution Public Meeting 5 pm Tuesday March 3 at Lexington Park Library

Water taken from St. Inigoes Creek earlier this month was tested by an independent lab and was determined to have 1,894 ppt (parts per trillion) in total PFAS—well beyond the safe limit according to the Michigan lab. The EPA has an advisory for levels above 70 ppt PFAS in drinking water.

Results:

Analyte	Concentration (ppt)
PFDA	21.7
PFOS	1544.4
PFBS	38.5
PFHxA	7.1
PFHpA	4.0
PFHxS	13.5
PFNA	131.6
PFDA	90.0
PFUnA	27.9
N-MeFOSAA	4.5
N-EtFOSAA	8.8
PFDoA	2.4
PFTrDA	881
PFTA	881
Total PFAS	1894.3

What Levels are Safe?

Currently, there is no enforceable federal drinking water standard for PFAS issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA has issued a health advisory for protecting human health over a lifetime exposure to PFAS at 70 ppt for PFOA and PFOS combined, however, this is an advisory and not enforceable. Another federal agency, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, recently released a report finding safe levels of PFAS chemicals to be up to 10-times lower than the EPA's levels for human health.

Contamination in Michigan led to a state advisory on eating fish and venison from the local area - the advisory states that no consumption level is safe. Oysters tested near the now-shuttered Pease Air Force Base in New Hampshire contained 55,000 ppt of PFAS.

PFAS Information Open House 5 pm to 7 pm Tuesday March 3 Lexington Park Library NAS Patuxent River will present

In response to our question whether oysters are safe to eat in the vicinity of Webster Field, Cathy Brohawn - Environmental program Manager for Maryland Department of the Environment - replied via email, "MDE does not have any information regarding PFAS levels in



surface waters or oysters at this time." Public health officials around the world are warning the public, especially child-bearing age women, about ingesting PFAS. Human health risks are largely undocumented and little research has been completed. Studies in animals suggest that these chemicals may cause cancer, genetic damage, and/or hormonal disruptions. MDE does monitor oysters for pathogens and designates boundaries where shellfish should not be taken for consumption. These areas are marked by boundary signage along the shoreline. MDE does warn the public that consumption of the "mustard" in crabs taken from the St. Mary's River is unsafe due to high level of PCBs. No level of consumption is safe, according to MDE notice for the St. Mary's.



Source: Australian Department of Defence

The Navy's website suggests there are many contaminated sites in Maryland including some Department of Defense (DOD) bases, as well as some private industries. The most common source of PFAS pollution is from fire fighting foam used extensively in years past by the DOD. Local fire departments around the world may have also

used these products in the past. PFAS family of over 4,000 chemicals are considered "forever chemicals" as they do not break down in the environment and are extremely slow to depart the human body.

Surface water and drinking water contamination are the biggest risks according to MDE. Yet accumulation of PFAS in animal tissue (oysters, crabs, fish, deer, etc.) is untested here locally and many wells are also not tested. Fortunately, there are water filters that can remove nearly all PFAS. Since we have a surface water (actually open river water) test showing extremely high levels, there must be a source from which surface runoff has carried PFAS into the river. Webster field has been a user of fire fighting foams containing PFAS - so has NAS Patuxent River. In fact an area known as Site 34 on Base was a storage area for PFAS contaminants; this is located close to the intersection of Rte 235 and Hermanville Road. We have been working with local

activists to gather a few sample of well water for testing.

We strongly advise residents in the vicinity of these two military establishments, along with health officials, our political leaders, and anyone working in the fishing industries, to attend this meeting on March 3.

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More reading:

[Truthout Article](#) | [2018 DOD Report](#)
[PBS Newshour Report](#) | [Michigan LCV reports Harvard Study](#)



OUR MISSION

To protect, improve, and promote the sustainability of the St. Mary's River Watershed through the collaborative efforts of economic, agricultural, environmental, social, cultural, and political stakeholders in the community.

We're on the web!
www.smrwa.org



Upcoming Events:

- River Clean Up
Saturday April 18
time TBD
Chancellor's Point Community Center
- Earth Day on the Square
Sunday April 19
12:30 to 4:30

Leonardtwn
- A River Affair
SAVE THE DATE
Monday, May 25
1:00 to 4:00 pm
Ruddy Duck Seafood & Alehouse
[Purchase Tickets](#)
- RiverFest 2020
Saturday, September 26
SAVE THE DATE
11:00 am to 4:00 pm

[Join or Renew Today!](#)

Historic St. Mary's City

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