

## **Air Force completes water testing at Memphis Air National Guard Base**

**MEMPHIS, Tenn.** – Water at the 164th Airlift Wing (AW) tests below the Environmental Protection Agency’s Lifetime Health Advisory levels for Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) individually, with a minor exceedance for PFOS and PFOA combined at one location, according to results from recent sampling at the base.

The Air Force Civil Engineer Center (AFCEC) validated results from groundwater, surface water, soil and sediment samples taken during a recent site inspection at the 164th AW - part of an Air Force-wide investigation into potential drinking water contaminated from past firefighting activities.

“The data and site information gathered during the investigation helped us identify any contamination and map potential pathways to drinking water,” said Col. Christian Cornette, the Mission Support Group Commander for the 164th AW. “We are committed to protecting the health of our Airmen and community partners and as such a thorough investigation was conducted to ensure safe drinking water.”

The Air Force launched a comprehensive approach to prevent, identify, and respond to water contamination after determining that Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) — a firefighting agent containing PFOS/PFOA and used commercially and by the Department of Defense — may have been released at fire training areas, emergency response and aircraft crash sites at active, Reserve, Air National Guard and closed installations.

The 164th AW was one of 203 installations the AFCEC identified as a potential AFFF-release location. In April 2018, the AFCEC completed a preliminary assessment that identified four potential release areas where AFFF was used, followed by a thorough site inspection that compiled data from groundwater, surface water, soil and sediment sampling.

Upon completion of the inspection, the report was sent to the Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation’s (TDEC) Division of Remediation, for their review and input. The final report was completed in October 2018, summarizing the findings of the investigation. There were no contaminants found above the screening criteria at three of the four Potential Release Locations (PRL). At the other PRL location, the Storm Water Outlet Two in the southwest corner of the base, the combined contaminants of PFOS and PFOA amounted to 80 ng/L, which exceeds the EPA drinking water Health Advisory (HA) screening level of 70 ng/L. TDEC noted in their review of the study this was a “negligible exceedance.”

The Air Force has switched to a new, more environmentally responsible AFFF formula that contains no PFOS and only traces amount of PFOA. The 164th AW replaced legacy AFFF in its fire vehicles with the new foam in November 2016.

For more information on the Air Force response to PFOS/PFOA, please visit <http://www.afcec.af.mil/WhatWeDo/Environment/Perfluorinated-Compounds/> or contact Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center Public Affairs at 1-866-725-7617 or email [afimsc.pa.workflow@us.af.mil](mailto:afimsc.pa.workflow@us.af.mil).