

Submission
No 44

**INQUIRY INTO INQUIRY INTO PFAS CONTAMINATION
IN WATERWAYS AND DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES
THROUGHOUT NEW SOUTH WALES**

Organisation: Blacktown City Council

Date Received: 11 December 2024

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NSW Parliament House
by email: PFAS@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC,

Feedback on proposed guidelines on PFAS in drinking water

Blacktown City Council welcomes the opportunity to provide comments on the National Health and Medical Research Council's proposed guide on PFAS (per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances) in drinking water.

We generally support the information provided but offer a number of suggestions that will improve readability and understanding for the general public and make it applicable to their everyday lives.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss any of the matters raised, please contact Jessica Speechly, Senior Environmental Health Officer on

Yours sincerely,

Kevin Turner
Manager Environment

Comments on the draft PFAS fact sheet

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| Health risk clarity | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The fact sheet briefly touches on health effects but could go further in detailing potential impacts from long-term exposure, particularly regarding low-dose chronic exposure.• A simplified explanation of how the thresholds are determined might help the public understand why the set levels are considered safe. |
| Content and accessibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The fact sheet explains PFAS basics. However, a plain English version of key points would help the reader. Adding more subheadings could also improve readability.• Including visual representations such as infographics or charts, would help visually communicate the information, assisting those less familiar with scientific language.• Providing QR codes or links for further reading on PFAS would engage readers and offer avenues for deeper understanding. |
| Practical and preventative guidance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Given the diverse origins of PFAS contamination, more guidance on reducing exposure at different points (e.g. home filtration recommendations) would make the fact sheet more practical for individuals and local organisations.• Adding specific recommendations for households, such as types of filtration methods proven to reduce PFAS in water, could enhance usability. |

Comments on the draft Statement on PFAS in drinking water

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| Transparency and risk communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The statement effectively references current research but could enhance public trust by clarifying uncertainties and evolving PFAS science.• Summarising specific studies or thresholds would give transparency, helping people understand the basis for safe levels.• Including a comparison of PFAS levels in drinking water with other common exposure sources (e.g. |
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food, dust) might contextualise the relative risk and reassure the public.

Regional and demographic considerations

- The statement could address how the guidelines apply across diverse areas with varying PFAS levels and water treatment capabilities.
- Emphasising adaptability in high-exposure regions could enhance relevance.

Update mechanism

- Highlighting a commitment to updating the guidelines as new research emerges would reflect responsiveness to ongoing progressions in PFAS science.
- This adaptability would be reassuring for both the public and stakeholders.