



FIRE DEPARTMENT SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Bulletin #18, Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) is Not “Safe as Soap,” April 9, 2021

The fire service has always been told that AFFF was as “safe as soap” to use in their communities and for their firefighters. It is actually not. This is now evidenced by nationwide PFAS water contamination issues.

1. AFFF should not hit the ground anywhere: it cannot be contained.
2. Do not touch AFFF. A DuPont toxicologist had warned in 1961 that PFAS should be handled with “extreme care.”¹
3. Do not dump it into drains, sewers or landfills! This includes burn pits and USEPA Superfund sites.

Not fully addressing the PFAS contamination by federal and state governments provides more opportunities for fire departments to expose their firefighters and contaminate their own communities with AFFF or AR-AFFF products. Here are some examples as reported recently to Foam Exposure Committee (FEC) members:

- Fire departments have been known to dump AFFF foam into their communities’ private lakes and ponds. Impacted community members now know about PFAS firsthand because of contaminated community water sources. They are now directly challenging fire officials. One property owner had ordered the fire department off the family acreage when a tanker arrived fully loaded with firefighting foam to dump in their family pond. The fire chief came out the next day bringing a contract with him to talk to the owner personally. The owner pointed out to the fire chief that the contract specified “emergency situations” which this particular incident did not cover. There had been no emergency – no lights, no sirens or firefighters in firefighting gear. The fire chief was ordered abruptly off the property by the owner.
- Fire departments have been known to dump AFFF at local USEPA Superfund sites ... simply because it is already highly contaminated. Never a good idea.
- At a local firehouse, a several gallon AFFF valve leak occurred in the station drive. This accident occurred in a city where the airport has contaminated the drinking water so residents are well educated on PFAS. A front end loader was brought in to scrape up several inches of soil which was then put into buckets. According to the concerned resident, the incident was treated as if they had spilled two gallons of milk.

¹ The Devil They Knew, PFAS Contamination and the Need for Corporate Accountability, Part II, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Environment of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, House of Representatives, Sept 10, 2019, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-116hhrg37952/html/CHRG-116hhrg37952.htm>



**Light Water ATC Plus 3M Foaming
Firefighting 5 US Gallons 2328 WVS**

\$50.00

or Best Offer

Local Pickup
At Howell, Michigan

Found for sale on eBay recently were some 20 year old firefighting foam pails. This product should have been removed by the statewide Michigan collection effort that occurred in 2020.¹ This product is noted to contain PFOS.² “These foams were manufactured before 2002, when 3M voluntarily ceased making them.”³

These type of products should stop being used completely!

1 EGLE, Michigan program to collect and dispose of PFAS-containing firefighting foams nets 51,000 gallons, October 06, 2020, https://www.michigan.gov/egle/0,9429,7-135-3308_3323-541554--_00.html#:~:text=The%20Michigan%20PFAS%20Action%20Response,gallons%20of%20AFFF%20for%20disposal

2 Table 1: List of PFOS Based Fire Fighting Foams, undated document, accessed 04 05 2021, http://www.firedirect.net/pdfs/technical/tech_1205_0005.pdf

3 Check for 3M Light Water firefighting foam, April 2018, <https://www.epa.gov/nz/news-and-alerts/alerts/please-check-to-see-if-you-have-3m-light-water-fire-fighting-foam/>