
FIRE DEPARTMENT SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Bulletin #25, Replacement Fire Apparatus, June 11, 2021

Fire departments which are in the process of ordering new apparatus should evaluate their firefighting foam specs. Due to the issues of PFAS water contamination by Aqueous Film Forming Foams (AFFF), departments are now switching to fluorine-free firefighting foam to protect their firefighters and communities. Fluorine-free foams are not bio-accumulative or toxic.

You can change the spec to fluorine-free foam. If you use a fluorinated foam in a new foam system it will become contaminated with PFAS. This will be a very costly mistake.

One east coast metropolitan fire department creatively utilized an 18 month time span to fit in three fiscal years' budgets when they needed to replace their entire aging fire apparatus fleet. At that time, the department changed over to fluorine-free firefighting foam. "Wicked smaht!"

In the April 2021 issue of *Fire Apparatus* magazine, there were 34 new apparatus listed with foam systems and 33 without. This is just a fraction of the sales nationwide.

The PFAS issue will affect the sale of used fire apparatus. In New York state, a chief interested in a used fire truck asked the dealer, "What foam was in the tank?" The dealer was unaware. No one is going to want to take on the issues of PFAS contamination in a fire apparatus. There are serious concerns that the apparatus and foam tanks cannot be completely cleaned of AFFF due to the US Department of Defense's report on previous firefighting foam transitions.¹

Apparatus dealers will be learning more of this issue firsthand as more lawsuits are filed involving fluorinated firefighting foams.

If your department has ordered new fire apparatus, you should consider fluorine-free firefighting foam to protect your firefighters and community.

¹ Department of Defense, PFAS Task Force, Progress Report, March 2020, p. 3,
https://media.defense.gov/2020/Mar/13/2002264440/-1/-1/1/PFAS_Task_Force_Progress_Report_March_2020.pdf

Department of Defense



Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Task Force

Progress Report

March 2020