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## **EPN RECOMMENDS A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF PFAS**

### **Releases a Detailed PFAS Action Plan**

**WASHINGTON, DC (April 27, 2021)** – The [Environmental Protection Network \(EPN\)](#), a bipartisan non-profit organization of EPA alumni, yesterday sent U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Michael Regan a set of [recommendations](#) to comprehensively address the serious public health and environmental impacts of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, known as PFAS. EPN, with input from many environmental and public health organizations, is proposing that EPA adopt a new PFAS Action Plan, which sets forth an expansive framework for dealing with PFAS, including recommendations related to its manufacture; commercial uses; its release, disposal and cleanup; and the health effects of exposure to PFAS in the air, land and water.

PFAS chemicals, which persist in the environment, are found in consumer products such as non-stick cookware, water-resistant clothing, fast-food containers and pizza boxes, and numerous industrial applications. There are over 9,000 PFAS chemicals on [EPA's Master List of PFAS substances](#). They pose significant risks to people's immune, reproductive and hormonal systems; affect liver enzymes; raise cholesterol levels; and increase risks of kidney and testicular cancer, among other health effects. A [recent study](#) found evidence that PFAS exposures increase the severity of the coronavirus.

EPN developed its proactive recommendations after identifying serious shortcomings in EPA's current [PFAS Action Plan](#), which was created during the Trump administration. EPN concluded that the existing plan is short on measures to reduce exposures to PFAS and transition away from this harmful class of chemicals. It also found that continuing to regulate PFAS on a chemical-by-chemical basis would be slow and ineffective.

"The manufacturing, use, and environmental release of most PFAS will continue for the foreseeable future if EPA continues to base decisions solely on the current plan," said Betsy Southerland, Ph.D, EPN member and former Director of the Office of Science and Technology in the EPA Office of Water. "This would doom additional generations of Americans to exposure to these high-risk chemicals without any effective regulation and health protection by EPA."

EPN's PFAS Action Plan lays out a set of specific goals and a roadmap for achieving them. They include:

- Development and implementation of a systematic process for obtaining necessary data on PFAS
- Stopping or severely restricting the introduction of new PFAS and new uses of existing PFAS
- Eliminating all non-critical uses of existing PFAS
- Preventing exposures to legacy or existing PFAS in the environment

- Filling important gaps in scientific understanding so that the health impacts of historical and current PFAS exposure on communities can be meaningfully evaluated
- Establishing strong collaboration across EPA to implement this comprehensive approach

“It’s time we asked ourselves whether the value of PFAS use for modern-day convenience outweighs the risks to public health and related health care costs,” said Linda Birnbaum, Ph.D, EPN member and former Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the National Toxicology Program. “No matter how we answer, one thing is clear—scientific innovation is critical to shifting to safer alternatives.”

EPA is currently engaged in a wide range of ongoing work on PFAS, which EPN encourages the agency to continue until a new PFAS Action Plan is fully developed and ready to be implemented. Given the extent of PFAS contamination, immediate and ongoing work is needed to protect people’s health, especially in low-income and BIPOC communities disproportionately impacted by the contamination.

“The comprehensive recommendations in EPN’s PFAS Action Plan demonstrate that EPA can achieve significantly greater protection of health and the environment by increasing the pace of activity under its existing authorities,” said Robert M. Sussman, EPN member and former EPA Deputy Administrator. “Significant funding, as proposed in the American Jobs Plan and the 2022 budget outline, will be needed to assure that EPA has the resources required to undertake this critical work.”

For more information about the PFAS Action Plan or EPN, visit our website at [www.environmentalprotectionnetwork.org](http://www.environmentalprotectionnetwork.org).

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The [Environmental Protection Network](http://www.environmentalprotectionnetwork.org) (EPN) is an organization of almost 550 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) alumni volunteering their time to protect the integrity of EPA, human health, and the environment.