



A guide to the PFAS National Environmental Management Plan consultation draft

PFAS is an abbreviation for per-and poly-fluoroalkyl substances. These are manufactured chemicals that have been used for more than 50 years. PFAS make products non-stick, water repellent, and weather and stain resistant. PFAS have been used in a range of products, including in fire-fighting foams, pesticides and stain repellents.

PFAS resist heat, chemical and biological attack, and are very stable. This stability creates a problem: PFAS last for a long time. They easily enter the environment – moving into soil, creeks, rivers and lakes. There are many places in Australia that are contaminated by PFAS. Worldwide, there is growing concern about the effects of PFAS on our health and on animals and plants.

The Australian government and State and Territory EPAs are working together to tackle PFAS contamination.

Government and environment agency staff met with national and international environmental regulation experts at the PFAS Summit in Melbourne in April 2017. They shared the latest information about PFAS, where it occurs and its possible impacts, and talked about the steps being taken in Australia to manage

the chemicals. There was agreement that a collaborative, national approach to the environmental regulation of PFAS is the best way forwards.

The PFAS National Environmental Management Plan consultation draft includes all the main points discussed at the PFAS Summit. The Plan describes what we know and do not know about PFAS and their impacts, how to deal with and clean up contaminated sites, how best to treat contaminated soil and waste, and methods for destroying the chemicals. It also describes the importance of EPAs and governments consulting and working with the community and industry.

We now need your views on the Plan and its contents. Do you agree with the suggested approach for dealing with PFAS in Australia? Are there other important things that should be included?

The Plan is online at www.epa.vic.gov.au/PFAS_NMP

We welcome your comments, opinions and insights. You can respond using the form at www.epa.vic.gov.au/PFAS_NMP

Thank you very much for helping us better manage the Australian environment.

