



**Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach  
Detachment Norco  
Norco, California  
Off-Base Drinking Water Sampling for PFAS**

March 28, 2024

**The Navy is requesting permission to sample drinking water obtained from wells within a sampling area near Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach, Detachment Norco (Det. Norco) for certain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, commonly known as PFAS.**

PFAS are a family of thousands of different chemicals which have been widely used in many household and industrial products since the 1950s. The Navy and Department of Defense (DoD) have developed proactive policies to address past releases of PFAS, including perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), at installations nationwide.

The most common activity associated with the historical release of PFAS to the environment at Det. Norco (**Figure 1**) is the use of firefighting foam (specifically aqueous film-forming foam, or AFFF) for testing, training, firefighting, and life-saving emergency responses. Due to this historical use, PFAS are present in the groundwater on-base and may also be present in nearby off-base drinking water wells located in the direction that groundwater flows away from the base.

In 2023, a Site Inspection (SI) was completed for the former fire station at Det. Norco. During the SI, PFOA and PFOS were detected in groundwater at Det. Norco and groundwater flow data were collected. As a result, the Navy established a sampling area one mile from the detections of PFOA and/or PFOS above 70 parts per trillion (ppt) in the direction that groundwater flows away from the base (**Figure 2**).

The City of Norco provides water to residential, commercial, and industrial properties within the sampling area; however, some properties within the sampling area may use a private well for drinking water. The Navy would like to sample these drinking water wells to determine if PFOA and PFOS, individually or combined, are above 70 ppt in these drinking water wells.



Figure 1 – Detachment Norco

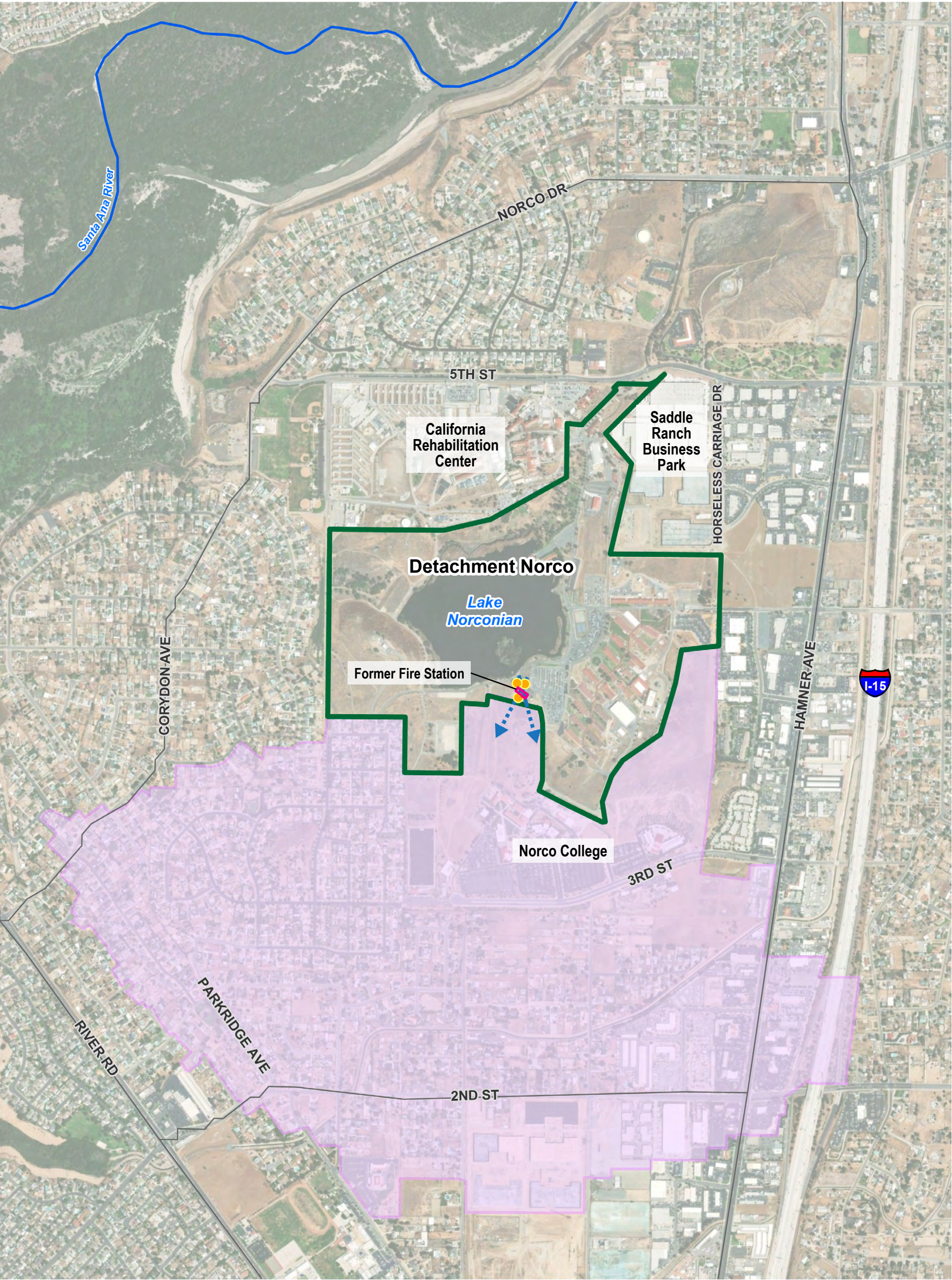
There is no regulatory requirement to conduct this drinking water sampling. The Navy is conducting the sampling in collaboration with the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA).

### **PFAS**

PFAS have been used in many household and industrial products because of their stain- and water-repellent properties. PFAS are now present virtually everywhere in the world because of the large amounts that have been manufactured and used.

**The Navy will provide bottled water for drinking and cooking to any property owner or tenant in the sampling area whose well contains PFOA and PFOS, individually or combined, above 70 ppt.  
The Navy will provide bottled water until a long-term solution is implemented.**

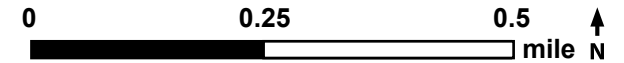
Figure 2 – Designated Sampling Area



LEGEND

- Current installation boundary
- Former Fire Station
- Groundwater monitoring well with detection of PFOA and/or PFOS above 70 ppt
- Groundwater flow direction (dashed where off-base direction is estimated)
- Parcels within sampling area

**Note:**  
Sampling area is in accordance with 2016 Navy policy. It includes all parcels within 1 mile in the direction that groundwater flows away from the Former Fire Station.



Once these compounds are released, many of them tend to stay in the environment for a very long time. Several PFAS are chemicals of emerging concern. Although the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has started the process to establish regulatory levels for several PFAS in drinking water, there are currently no Safe Drinking Water Act regulatory standards. The EPA has developed drinking water health advisories for a small number of PFAS; these advisories are non-enforceable and non-regulatory. The advisories provide technical information to states and other public health officials on health effects, analytical methodologies, and treatment technologies.

On March 14, 2023, the EPA proposed a draft regulatory drinking water standard for certain PFAS, including PFOA and PFOS. In response, later that month DoD issued the following statement:

“DoD respects and values the public comment process on this proposed nationwide drinking water rule and looks forward to the clarity that a final regulatory drinking water standard for PFAS will provide. In anticipation of the final standard that EPA expects to publish by the end of 2023, the DoD is assessing what actions DoD can take to be prepared to incorporate EPA’s final regulatory standard into our current cleanup process, such as reviewing our existing data and conducting additional sampling where necessary. In addition, DoD will incorporate nationwide PFAS cleanup guidance, issued by EPA and applicable to all owners and operators under the federal cleanup law, as to when to provide alternate water when PFAS are present.”

As of March 2024, EPA has not finalized this standard.

More information about EPA’s actions for PFAS in drinking water is online at: <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>.

## NAVY POLICY

For now, the Navy is continuing to follow the policy it issued in June 2016 to conduct investigations

at installations where there has been a known or suspected release of PFAS to the environment. This Navy policy can be found here: <https://www.secnav.navy.mil/eie/Documents/PerflurinatedCompoundsPerfluoroalkylSubstances.pdf>. The first priority with these investigations is to identify and address drinking water wells with PFOA and PFOS concentrations above 70 ppt, individually or combined, as a result of Navy operations.

## ACTIONS BASED ON RESULTS

Preliminary drinking water sample results are typically received from the laboratory within 30 days after the samples are collected, and final laboratory reports are typically available within 3 months. Property owners (and tenants, if possible) will be called to notify them of their preliminary drinking water sample results. Final drinking water sample results will be mailed to property owners and tenants. Final drinking water sampling results are available online at: <https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/eeer/ecc/pfas/map/pfasmap.html>. Individual drinking water sample results cannot be linked with the sampled property on this website.

The Navy will provide bottled water for drinking and cooking to any property owner or tenant in the sampling area whose drinking water well contains PFOA and PFOS, individually or combined, above 70 ppt and will continue to provide bottled water until a permanent solution is implemented.

The Navy will continue to investigate the presence of PFAS at Det. Norco and evaluate if actions are needed on base. The Navy is committed to ensuring the safety of the property owners and tenants in the community. The public can find out more about all on-base environmental investigations by visiting <https://go.usa.gov/xhrxN>.

## HEALTH INFORMATION

Nationwide studies on PFOA and PFOS have found both compounds in the blood samples of the general population. Research to better understand health effects from exposure to low levels of PFOA, PFOS, and other PFAS is ongoing. Federal agencies such as the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and the EPA continue to conduct and support research into health effects associated with PFAS exposure. More information about health effects can be found online at:

ATSDR: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/index.html>

EPA: <https://www.epa.gov/pfas>

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS  
OFF-BASE DRINKING WATER SAMPLING**

[www.navfac.navy.mil/DetNorco\\_Offbase\\_PFAS](http://www.navfac.navy.mil/DetNorco_Offbase_PFAS)

**IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT**

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