

Fentress Drinking Water Testing Frequently Asked Questions

Updated Feb 9, 2016

1. When is the public information session?

The first Public Information Session was held on February 2, 2016 at Butts Road Intermediate School from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Representatives from the U.S. Navy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, the City of Chesapeake, and the Virginia Department of Health were available to speak to the public. For additional information regarding the meeting, you may visit the public website at www.cnic.navy.mil/FentressInfo, email fentressinfo@navy.mil, or call (757) 433-3132.

2. What are the optional dates/times for sampling?

The sampling will be conducted for properties in the designated area from February 3 through February 13, 2016. Sampling appointments will be available between the hours of 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. There will be no sampling appointments on Saturday, February 6 and Sunday, February 7.

3. Who will be taking the sample?

A team of two U.S. Navy representatives will conduct the sampling. An adult resident (18 years of age or older) must be present during the sampling.

4. How long will the sampling take?

The sampling will take approximately 30 minutes. U.S. Navy representatives will take a sample from a faucet inside your home, measure and record basic information about the water (e.g. pH and temperature), and review the homeowner questionnaire.

5. When will I receive the results?

The results are expected in March 2016, and the U.S. Navy will provide a private notification of your results. If your drinking water is found to contain PFCs above U.S. EPA Provisional Health Advisory Levels, the U.S. Navy will contact you in person to arrange for alternate water (e.g. bottled water) for drinking and cooking in your home until a long-term solution can be implemented.

6. Will my results be private?

All results will be confidential. You will receive your results and all references to results in official reports or documents will have a random number associated with your drinking water sample. Reports and documents will not contain your name or address.

7. How do I know if my home is within the designated sampling area?

If your home/property is located the U.S. Navy's designated sampling area, the property owner should receive individual notice(s) from the U.S. Navy. In attempt to notify every resident, the U.S. Navy went door-to-door within the designated sampling area on January 28, 2016, to provide a notification packet personally to residents who were home. Navy representatives left the notification packet hanging on the front doorknob or near the front door, for those residents who were not available to talk. Additionally,

the Navy sent notification packets to affected property owners by U.S. Postal service, on February 4, 2016. If you received a notification packet personally, in the mail, or on your door, please call (757) 341-0450 to schedule an appointment to sample your drinking water. If you are unsure whether you are located in the sampling area, you may call (757) 341-0450 for clarification.

8. Will the U.S. Navy sample my water if I live outside the designated sampling area?

At this time, the U.S. Navy is only sampling drinking water from residences within the designated sampling area. The U.S. Navy will work with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) to review the results from the designated sampling area when they become available in March and to determine the next steps for the investigation, including determining if the sampling area needs to be expanded. Several residents from outside the sampling area provided their contact information via email, or at the February 2, 2016, Open House. If the U.S. Navy's sampling expands into areas where these residents live, the U.S. Navy will use this list to assist in contacting residents. The U.S. Navy will also use residential information provided by the city to contact residents in any future areas of sampling. Residents on private drinking water wells outside the current sampling area, who would like to be added to this contact list, may make a request via email at fentressinfo@navy.mil, or by calling (757) 433-3132. Please note, the Navy will send individual notice(s) and complete another door-to-door effort to notify residents within the expanded sample area (if warranted).

9. If the sampling area is expanded, how will I know if my home needs to be sampled?

Following the receipt of the sampling results in March, the U.S. Navy will hold another Open House to present and discuss the results, and to identify specific areas outside the base that warrant additional off-base sampling. If the sampling area is expanded in the future, the U.S. Navy will follow the same individual notification procedure as was completed for residents in the initial designated sampling area. The process will include going door-to-door with notification packets and mailing notification letters to property owners.

10. How will the Navy inform me of the results and any additional public meetings?

Residents who have their drinking water sampled will be notified individually of their results. In addition, the U.S. Navy is planning to host another Open House Public Meeting in March 2016 to share a summary of the results from the off-base drinking water sampling. Anyone interested in being notified of future public meetings or additional information the U.S. Navy has available to share with the public should sign-up for our email list. Please contact the Navy through email at fentressinfo@navy.mil or by phone at (757) 433-3132, if you wish to be added to our email list. The Navy will also advertise future public meetings in the newspaper, as was done for the Open House Meeting held on February 2, 2016.

11. If I signed-in at the February 2, 2016 Open House, am I included on the email list?

Any resident who provided their name and email address at the sign-in table during the February 2, 2016 Open House Meeting is already on the email list and does not need to provide this information again.

12. Will there be a study of blood levels of residents in the sampling area to address questions related to long-term exposure and health effects?

The U.S. Navy's first priority is to sample private drinking water in the designated sampling area to determine if our neighbors' drinking water has been impacted by the firefighting foam used historically for training on NALF. There are no plans to test blood levels at this time. If future investigation plans include such a study, the public will be informed through the website (www.cnic.navy.mil/FentressInfo) or through our email distribution list. Please note that according to information provided by the EPA, blood tests are available, but not routinely done. The results can be inconclusive, do not allow for a determination of the source of the exposure, and do not predict personal health effects.

13. What type of carbon filtration system would be best for my home for treating PFCs?

Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) (also known as activated charcoal), has the ability to filter many perfluorinated compounds from water, including PFOA and PFOS. GAC filters accumulate contaminants and do not destroy them. The filters become "full" and must be replaced periodically (and the filters should be properly disposed) to keep the system operating properly. Any GAC system will help in controlling PFCs, although without testing it is difficult to determine effectiveness. GAC filters must be installed and maintained (especially, changing the filter routinely) in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations.

Other sorption systems (such as resins) may work for these compounds, but there is much variation in what resins are designed to treat, so they might not treat PFCs at all. Ask the manufacturer if these products can remove PFCs before considering purchasing one.

Reverse osmosis filters have also been shown to have some effectiveness on PFCs. The reverse osmosis (RO) separation process uses pressure to force water through a membrane, which retains the contaminant on one side and allows the pure solvent (water) to pass to the other side. The water for reverse osmosis filters typically travels through other filters prior to encountering the membrane (e.g. a pre-filter to remove dirt). This reduces the likelihood of damage to the membrane. Reverse osmosis filter membranes and corresponding pre-filters must be replaced periodically to maintain the effectiveness of the system.

For all treatment systems, it is difficult to determine how effective they are without testing. Testing also can help understand how well the system will work with your water and how often the sorbent/filters/membranes should be replaced to maintain treatment.

14. Should business owners or churches in the area share any information with their workers or congregation about PFCs and the sampling?

The U.S. Navy cannot decide whether a private business or church should share information about PFCs and sampling with its employees or congregation. The Navy understands these entities' concerns and suggests businesses and churches seek guidance from relevant professionals on how best to share this information

15. What's the liability for business owners or churches in the designated sampling area?

The U.S. Navy cannot provide legal advice. We would suggest businesses and churches with any liability concerns discuss them with a licensed attorney. One way to identify a licensed attorney near NALF Fentress is through the Virginia State Bar (<http://www.vsb.org/>), Virginia Beach Bar Association (<http://www.vbbarassoc.com/find-lawyer/>) or Chesapeake Bar Association (757) 410-3019.

16. What is the timeline as of February 9, 2016?



The website: www.cnic.navy.mil/fentressinfo continues to be updated with additional information.