



# Friends of Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge

## PFAS Contamination

### What are PFAS?

PFAS are a group of chemicals with special properties that make them durable and resistant to degradation. They can be found in a variety of consumer products like cleaning agents, fire-fighting foam, clothing, and personal care products. People can become exposed to PFAS through contaminated drinking water and seafood, and they are thought to cause various health problems such as low birth weights in newborns, cancer, immune suppression, and liver problems.



Look for this pumping station while you are walking the trail!

### PFAS Contamination on Cape Cod

Since Cape Cod is just one giant sandbar, it is easy for PFAS to leach through the sand and into the aquifer, contaminating our drinking water. Several plumes, or sections of contaminated water, can be found on the Cape. Military activities are a common source of PFAS contamination on the Cape. The use of fire-fighting foam containing PFAS during military training at Joint Base Cape Cod and the Barnstable County Fire/Rescue Training Academy has contributed to the contamination of ponds, streams, and groundwater. Various treatment facilities or pumping stations have been established across the Cape to clean up contaminated water. In fact, look around right now and you will see one of these pumping stations!

