Toxic PFAS Pollution Pathways

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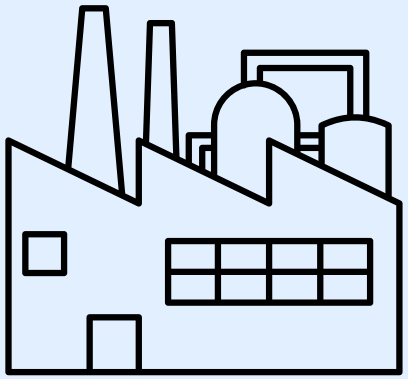
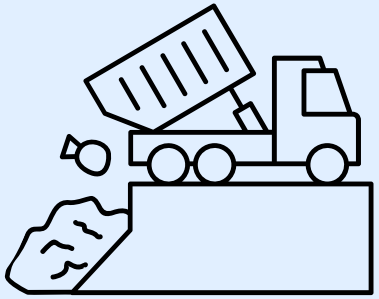
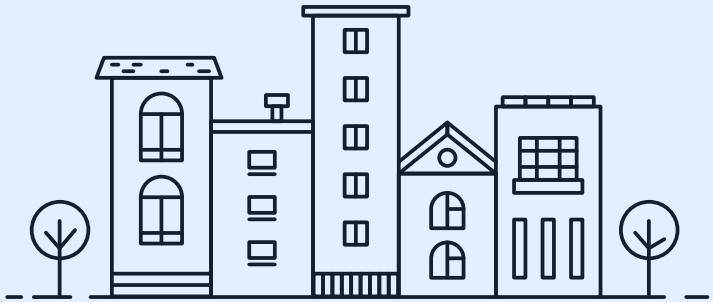


INDUSTRIES USING PFAS

Landfill leachate (contaminated liquid) sent for treatment



MANCHESTER LANDFILL

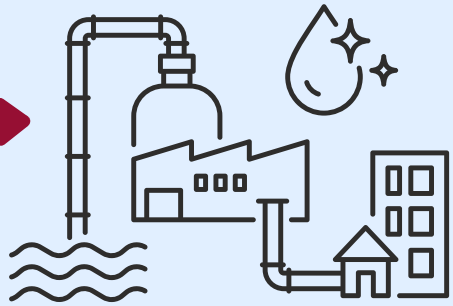


OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

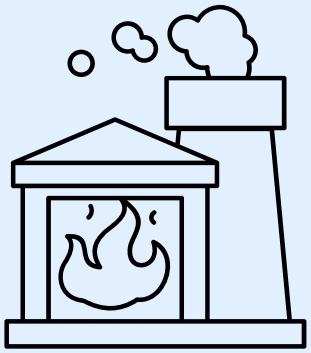
Wastewater discharged directly

Wastewater sent for treatment

MANCHESTER WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT



Sewage sludge



MANCHESTER SLUDGE INCINERATOR

Air emissions

NASHUA & OTHER DOWNSTREAM COMMUNITIES

Wastewater discharged directly

Drinking water

MERRIMACK RIVER

TOXIC FOREVER CHEMICALS THREATEN OUR HEALTH

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What are PFAS (nicknamed "forever chemicals")?

- PFAS are a large class of human-made chemicals that are extremely persistent in the environment. They can take up to several thousand years to break down, which is why they are also called "forever chemicals."
- PFAS are used widely in consumer and industrial products, including dental floss, food packaging, textiles, firefighting foam, construction materials, electronics, and more.
- PFAS chemicals build up, or "bioaccumulate," in fish and other wildlife.
- Humans can be exposed to PFAS through contaminated water, food (including fish), and air.

Why are we concerned?

- PFAS chemicals are linked to certain types of cancer, increased cholesterol, decreased vaccine response, liver impacts, pregnancy-induced hypertension and preeclampsia, decreases in birth weight and developmental impacts, among other health risks.
- PFAS affect communities of color disproportionately because sources of pollution, like industrial facilities, are more likely to be located in low-income and neighborhoods of color.
- Environmental justice communities that eat more locally caught freshwater fish for economic and/or cultural reasons can be exposed to greater health risks.

What's happening at the Manchester Wastewater Treatment Facility?

- Industrial facilities and the Manchester Municipal Landfill send wastewater into the Manchester Wastewater Treatment Facility.
- The Manchester Wastewater Treatment Facility is not equipped to remove PFAS, so it discharges water with PFAS chemicals into the Merrimack River. The river is an important habitat for fish. It also provides drinking water to downstream communities, including Nashua.
- The Manchester Wastewater Treatment Facility also creates a byproduct called "sewage sludge." It burns this sludge in an on-site incinerator, emitting PFAS chemicals into the air.

How do we stop PFAS pollution from wastewater treatment facilities?

- The best way to stop PFAS pollution from wastewater treatment facilities is through "upstream source reduction."
- Upstream source reduction means reducing or eliminating the use of PFAS in industrial facilities, to reduce or prevent PFAS from being sent to the wastewater treatment facility and the sludge incinerator.
- Industrial facilities can reduce or eliminate their use of PFAS through phase-outs.

TO LEARN MORE, SCAN THE CODE