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JACQUELYN A. SUÁREZ
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To: All Fire Departments

From: Richard J. Mikutsky, Director / State Fire Marshal

Re: Updated Guidance on the Use of Class B Aqueous Film Forming Foam (“AFFF”)

Date: August 26, 2025

As the investigation and evaluation into Class “B” foam continues, this office continues to receive inquiries regarding the use of foam during firefighting and training. This memo has been developed in conjunction with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (“NJDEP”) and shall supersede the prior Class “B” memo dated November 29, 2022.

AFFF contains certain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (“PFAS”), including perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (“PFOS”) and perfluorooctanoic acid (“PFOA”). The NJDEP has issued regulations that apply to PFAS, including listing PFOS and PFOA as hazardous substances.¹

AFFF is a fire suppressant used to extinguish flammable liquid fires such as fuel fires. Newer fluorine-free foams (FFF or F3) intended to replace AFFF are becoming available. It is advised that departments work with their equipment manufacturers and consult [National Fire Protection Association guidance](#) as it relates to optimal firefighting with F3s and the necessary cleaning of equipment to reduce contamination of newer foams.

Updated guidance is provided below:

- 1) Class B AFFF (which contain PFAS) should never be used for training. Instead, for training, use only foams that are specifically meant to be used for training purposes.
- 2) Class B AFFF should only be used on Class “B” fires and only when all other firefighting options have been considered or are not viable (such as letting the fire burn out).
- 3) AFFF manufactured after 2003 may be less toxic but still contains PFAS. If the use of PFAS containing AFFF is necessary, use the newer foams if the option exists.

¹ Pursuant to P.L. 2023, c. 243, most uses of Class B AFFF will be prohibited as of January 8, 2026. The legislation also directs NJDEP to establish a program to provide for the collection and safe disposal or destruction of Class B AFFF and provides funds to NJDEP to reimburse eligible fire companies for the cost of the replacement foam.

- 4) In determining whether to use Class B AFFF, issues such as product performance, safety, property protection, operational practicalities, and cost should always be considered.
- 5) Use of Class B AFFF should be limited to only the amount required to protect life and property and when firefighter safety is paramount.
- 6) If Class B AFFF was required and discharged, the local HazMat unit and NJDEP must be notified immediately. NJDEP should be notified via its hotline, 1-877- WARNDEP.
- 7) All firefighting foams have the potential to cause environmental harm, particularly in bodies of water and to drinking water supplies. All reasonable and practical steps must be taken to manage and mitigate that risk.
- 8) All inventory of unused AFFF must be kept securely stored and labeled consistent with NFPA11 to prevent unintended releases.
 - a. Do not sell or give away foams to other fire departments.
 - b. Use secondary containment to prevent release of AFFF to the environment in the case of a spill or accident while in storage.
 - c. Label containers and tanks with the contents, manufacture date, and any hazard(s) of the contents
 - d. Maintain safety data sheets (SDS) for the AFFF and keep them available.
- 9) If unused AFFF cannot be properly stored and labeled consistent with item 8, above, it must be properly disposed of by a Hazmat licensed contractor or safely transported to a designated collection site as notified by this agency.

Resources to assist in the transition away from Class B AFFF are available. Key resources are listed below.

- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Research Foundation: [Firefighting Foams: Fire Service Roadmap](#). This site contains multiple newsletters covering the major issues of transitioning to new fluorine-free foams. There are also links to four 2024 Fire Service Roadmap Workshop Series recordings related to this topic.
- [State of Washington Aqueous Film-forming foam \(AFFF\) webpage](#) includes multiple resources including [Best Practices for Deep Cleaning Fire Equipment Contaminated with AFFF](#)
- [State of Connecticut Reducing and Preventing Releases of PFAS-Containing Firefighting Foam webpage](#)
- The Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council's [PFAS Guidance Document](#) that includes [Chapter 3 Firefighting Foams](#) and the [ITRC AFFF Fact Sheet](#).

NJDEP and DCA are working on a comprehensive guidance document as we move forward in the transition to fluorine-free foams. This guidance will be shared as soon as it is available.