Washington State Proposes New PFAS Restrictions for Everyday Products

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The state of Washington is moving to restrict per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in six kinds of everyday products. Earlier this month, the Department of Ecology (Ecology) released draft recommendations under its Safer Products for Washington program. The recommendations cover 15 product categories, including firefighting equipment, artificial turf, and nail products. Not all involve PFAS, and none of the recommendations are final, as public comment is presently open through December 18, 2026.

During this current cycle, which operates on a repeating five-year regulatory cycle, Ecology looked at 15 product categories. For each chemical-product pairing, it assigned one of three paths: (1) restrict; (2) require reporting; or (3) take no action. Ecology's announcement and draft report to the Legislature lay out each determination.

Note that Ecology only restricts a product category when a safer alternative is feasible and available. It specifically looks for alternatives that manufacturers already use, not if a replacement could possibly be developed. That said, when alternatives do not exist, Ecology can require manufacturers to provide reports on a chemical used in a product category that is under review. For example, Ecology will require reporting on 6PPD, a chemical used in tires to prevent degradation, as there is currently no substitute. Ecology also asks for reporting on PVC and PVDC in plastic packaging and flame retardants in insulation other than foam roofing. As to PCBs in printing inks, Ecology presently recommends no action.

For PFAS specifically, Ecology's recommendations include the following:

+ **Architectural paints.** Restriction for most uses. However, only reporting is required for fluoropolymers in certain special-purpose paints, such as those used on chemical storage tanks and bridge metalwork.
+ **Artificial turf.** Restriction on PFAS used by manufacturers as processing aids in the artificial grass blades. A separate recommendation covers 6PPD in the rubber infill.
+ **Cookware and kitchen supplies.** Restriction. Ecology points to ceramic nonstick coatings, cast iron, stainless steel, and carbon steel as alternatives.
+ **Firefighting protective gear.** Restriction for structural turnout, station wear, technical rescue, wildland, and EMS gear. Other protective gear will stay under the earlier reporting rule.
+ **Floor waxes and polishes.** Restriction.
+ **Hard-surface sealers.** Restriction. These products go on concrete, stone, and unglazed tiles.

Importantly, four of these product categories, specifically cookware, firefighting gear, floor care, and sealers, already carry reporting requirements from Ecology's last cycle. However, the draft now proposes to restrict PFAS in each category. Thus, while initial reporting rules are the first steps, they are certainly not the last.

To date, a significant amount of PFAS regulation has focused on drinking water and contaminated sites. However, Washington's approach addresses the products themselves. Ecology points to potential exposure from the manufacture, use, and disposal of such chemicals, and aims to deal with exposure pathways before a product ever reaches a consumer.

For companies, this changes the landscape. Utilities and site owners are no longer the only ones in regulatory sights;

manufacturers, formulators, importers, and retailers are in it too. Ultimately, Ecology's proposal will require any businesses or entities that sell products in Washington to explain what is in the product and why.

Importantly, Ecology's proposal is a draft; nothing within the proposal is immediately enforceable. Ecology plans to have its final report ready by June 2027, with a preliminary draft rule released in summer/early fall 2027 and adoption of its rules by June 2028. Because Ecology represented it would incorporate information obtained during the comment period, it is possible the final version looks different from its initial proposal.

Although Ecology's test turns on whether a “safer” alternative is feasible and available, it is critical to remember this is a regulatory question, not a finding that a product can cause harm. It says nothing about a person's absorbed dose of a chemical within a product or whether that dose is capable of or could cause disease. Those questions require different evidence.

In addition to providing comments (comments close December 18, 2026, at 11:59 pm PT), companies that sell any products in Washington that are encompassed within Ecology's proposal should start the following:

+ **Map your products against the six categories of PFAS-containing products** (architectural paints; artificial turf; cookware and kitchen supplies; firefighting protective gear; floor waxes and polishes; and hard surface sealers). Include formulations, coatings, and processing aids, not just the finished item.
+ **Ask your suppliers.** PFAS often comes in through inputs. Get the answers in writing.
+ **Test Ecology's alternatives against your own application.** If one does not work, say so and provide the data. That is the kind of data Ecology says it wants.
+ **Check supply agreements, indemnities, and warranties** for language tied to PFAS or regulatory compliance.

Comments can be sent to SaferProductsWA@ecy.wa.gov or via Ecology's public comment page. If you want help deciding what to say, please reach out to us. We will keep watching as Ecology's draft proposal moves toward a final report.

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