



Fact Sheet: Final Regulatory Determination for Perchlorate

EPA has decided to regulate perchlorate under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The science that has led to this decision has been peer reviewed by independent scientists and public health experts including the National Academies of Science.

This decision is the first time EPA has decided to regulate a substance from the Contaminant Candidate List required by the 1996 Amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act. This decision reverses a 2008 preliminary determination and considers input from almost 39,000 public commenters.

Questions and Answers

What is perchlorate?

Perchlorate is both a naturally occurring and man-made chemical that is used to produce rocket fuel, fireworks, flares and explosives. Perchlorate can also be present in bleach and in some fertilizers.

Why did EPA decide to regulate perchlorate?

EPA has determined that perchlorate meets SDWA's three criteria for regulating a contaminant. 1) Perchlorate may have adverse health effects because scientific research indicates that perchlorate can disrupt the thyroid's ability to produce hormones needed for normal growth and development. 2) There is a substantial likelihood that perchlorate occurs with frequency at levels of health concern in public water systems because monitoring data show over four percent of public water systems have detected perchlorate, and 3.) There is a meaningful opportunity for health risk reduction for the between 5.2 and 16.6 million people who may be served drinking water containing perchlorate.

Is EPA requiring public water systems to take action now to address perchlorate?

No, this action notifies interested parties of EPA's determination to regulate perchlorate, but imposes no requirements on public water systems at this time. However, this action initiates the process to develop a national primary drinking water regulation (NPDWR) for perchlorate.

What happens next?

EPA will continue to evaluate the science on perchlorate health effects and occurrence in developing a proposed NPDWR for perchlorate. EPA will also now begin to evaluate the feasibility and affordability of treatment technologies to remove perchlorate and will examine the costs and benefits of potential standards. EPA will consult with our Science Advisory Board and with the National Drinking Water Advisory Council. EPA intends to publish the proposed regulation and analyses for public review and comment within 24 months. EPA will consider the public comments and expects to promulgate a final regulation within 18 months of the proposal.

What is a regulatory determination?

A regulatory determination is a formal decision on whether EPA should initiate a rulemaking process to develop a national primary drinking water regulation (NPDWR) for a specific contaminant.

EPA identifies contaminants for decisions on whether drinking water regulations are needed and for research prioritization with the drinking water Contaminant Candidate List (CCL). The contaminants on the list are known or anticipated to occur in public water systems. However, they are currently not regulated with a national primary drinking water regulation. Under the Safe Drinking Water Act, EPA publishes a CCL every five years. EPA then makes regulatory determinations from the list of contaminants. EPA included perchlorate on the first, second, and third CCLs that were published in the *Federal Register* on March 2, 1998, February 24, 2005, and October 8, 2009, respectively.

Where can I find more information about this notice and the Perchlorate Regulatory Determination?

For information on the regulatory determinations for the second CCL, please visit http://www.epa.gov/safewater/ccl/reg_determine2.html. For general information on drinking water, please visit the EPA Safewater Web site at www.epa.gov/safewater or contact the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791. The Safe Drinking Water Hotline is open Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Eastern Time.

For information on perchlorate, please visit <http://water.epa.gov/drink/contaminants/unregulated/perchlorate.cfm>.