



PFAS in Durable Personal Protective Equipment

Perfluoroalkyl & polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a diverse group of synthetic compounds distinguished by their versatility, strength, and durability, setting them apart from other chemicals. There are perhaps as many as 700 commercially active substances that may be considered PFAS. However, not all PFAS compounds are the same - they contain unique properties and characteristics that yield distinct environmental and health profiles. PFAS compounds are highly differentiated, and while some may require limitations or prohibitions from certain uses, others have well-established profiles and do not pose unreasonable risks to human health or the environment when used appropriately.

Manufacturing durable personal protective equipment (PPE) depends on the molecular stability and durability that PFAS compounds provide to protect frontline users from harsh conditions and chemicals:

- **Industrial workers** require protection from potent chemicals, flame exposure, and extreme weather.
- **Medical workers** require PPE that reliably repels potentially hazardous liquids.
- **Defense personnel** rely on clothing that protects against flame exposure, biological hazards, and harsh chemicals.
- **First responders** count on PPE for flame protection that can repel oil and makes gear water resistant to avoid steam burns.

Industrial grade PPE protects against a myriad of threats to frontline workers and our troops. In each case, **PFAS compounds are essential** due to their unique chemical properties. While industry stakeholders continue to research and develop alternative chemistries, there are no suitable alternatives to achieve the durability and resilience for many PPE requirements.



DRIVING SCIENCE-BASED MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Creating regulations that treat all PFAS compounds the same, or impose blanket restrictions on uses, would have devastating economic and safety consequences for U.S. PPE manufacturing. Sustainable management of PFAS compounds enables continued economic advancement when using a **science- and risk-based approach** to effectively administer regulations that protect human health and the environment.