

April 2, 2022

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that it completed review of a July 2020 determination to not regulate perchlorate in drinking water. The agency concluded that the 2020 decision is supported by the best available peer reviewed science. Additionally, EPA announced multiple integrated actions to ensure that public health is protected from perchlorate in drinking water.

The agency is committed to partnering with state co-regulators, Tribes, and communities to address perchlorate. Through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, EPA is providing \$11.7 billion through the Drinking Water State Revolving Funds supplemental, and \$4 billion in dedicated funding to address emerging contaminants. This funding is part of the single-largest investment in U.S. water infrastructure and can be used to address perchlorate and other drinking water needs.

Investing in infrastructure will complement additional actions the agency is announcing today. EPA will support research to better understand perchlorate as it relates to firework displays. EPA also plans to establish a web-based toolkit to provide updated technical information to assist drinking water systems and communities that may have concerns about perchlorate contamination of their source water. EPA anticipates that this toolkit would be available online in 2022.

Additionally, cleaning up existing contamination and protecting drinking water sources from future contamination is central to the Agency's approach for addressing perchlorate in drinking water. EPA is working with states to address perchlorate contamination under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), also known as the Superfund program. These cleanups have already reduced perchlorate levels at some sites. The agency will also consider proposed revisions to Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) standards for the open burning and open detonation of waste explosives and bulk propellants to reduce impacts of perchlorate to human health and the environment.

While EPA is not pursuing a drinking water regulation at this time, the agency will continue to consider new information on the health effects and occurrence of perchlorate. EPA's decision does not impact any state standards for perchlorate. The agency will continue to consider if perchlorate should be added to future Contaminant Candidate Lists for possible regulation under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

For more information visit: <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/perchlorate-drinking-water>.

Background

Perchlorate is commonly used in solid rocket propellants, munitions, fireworks, and airbag initiators for vehicles, matches, and signal flares. Perchlorate may occur naturally, particularly in arid regions such as the southwestern U.S., and can be found as a byproduct in hypochlorite solutions used for treating drinking water and nitrate salts used to produce fertilizers, explosives, and other products.

In July 2020, EPA made a final determination that perchlorate is not found in drinking water with a frequency and at levels of public health concern to support a meaningful opportunity for health risk reduction through a national perchlorate drinking water regulation. EPA's review of the perchlorate 2020 final action was completed in accordance with the Executive Order 13990. Today's action is consistent with EPA's previous decision.