



SENATOR JESSE KIEHL

SB 176 PFAS in Drinking Water

Sponsor Statement

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of chemicals harmful to human health. They are linked to serious health conditions including low birth weight, thyroid disease, and cancer. Low levels of exposure are common because PFAS can be found in products from non-stick cookware to waterproof jackets. But large-scale exposures happen where certain firefighting foams or other compounds containing PFAS seep into drinking water and linger for years.

Alaska's Department of Environmental Conservation declared PFAS hazardous substances several years ago. Senate Bill 176 sets health-protective limits on the amount of PFAS in drinking water. The bill guarantees Alaskans in areas with a lot of PFAS will get clean drinking water and their blood levels checked. To prevent future pollution, SB 176 bans PFAS foams late in 2021 when the Federal Aviation Administration stops forcing airports to use them (unless some other federal law preempts.)

Because there is no effective alternative for the intensity of fire threat oil & gas operations face at refineries or the Trans Alaska Pipeline terminal, the bill carves out an exemption for those producing, transporting, or refining oil and gas until the State Fire Marshal determines an effective non-PFAS substance could do the job.