

Update 5: DEP expands sampling plan at the former Brunswick Naval Air Station

September 3, 2024

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) staff and contractors maintained daily water sampling and foam recovery removal operations throughout the long weekend. After the weekend rain event, the site was inspected on Sunday and found no additional foam impacts. Overall, the amount of foam observed and collected continues to gradually drop to reduced amounts that are easily contained and removed.

The Department is planning to supplement the ongoing water monitoring work this week with four soil samples from the vicinity of Hangar 4 and the park area. Furthermore, fish tissue samples from the Merriconeag Stream, Mare Brook, and Androscoggin River will be collected.

As previously announced, the DEP intends to sample water supplies in the south-southeast direction of Hangar 4, roughly one mile from the discharge location. Locations were selected by carefully reviewing the historical data, hydrogeology, and test findings from the former naval air base and after hearing concerns from the public at last week's forum. Several of the water sources in this area have previously been sampled by the Navy. In order to arrange with homeowners to test their drinking water wells, DEP employees will be contacting property owners along Coombs Road from the southern intersection with Gurnet Road up to roughly a quarter mile past the intersection with Hawkins Lane, including properties on Hawkins Lane and Purinton Road.

Following the same protocol the Department is using to conduct the statewide PFAS investigation, test results from this initiative will be used to assess whether more testing is needed.

The DEP will consider reimbursement requests from homeowners in the above-mentioned area who may have recently tested their drinking water wells for PFAS. All of the requirements listed in the accompanying document must be fulfilled to qualify due to the limited funds available for reimbursement.

Data collected at the inlet to the on-site surface water collection pond (Sample Point SW-11) on August 22 show a decrease in concentrations of PFAS when compared to the data recently received from samples collected on August 19 from the same sample location (Sample Point Pond In). Data are expressed in nanograms per liter which is the same as parts per trillion. The laboratory report with all data will be provided on the DEP website. On August 22, DEP began monitoring five surface water sample locations from the on-site ponds to Mare Brook. These locations are being monitored regularly with the next data expected on or around September 5. Additionally, two locations in Harpswell Cove are being sampled weekly, with the first data expected next week.

Sample Date 8/19/2024

- PFOS (ng/l) 1,040,000
- Total PFAS (All Compounds) (ng/l) 1,231,860

Sample Date 8/22/2024

- PFOS (ng/l) 197,000
- Total PFAS (All Compounds) (ng/l) 255,287.90

The public drinking water supply to Brunswick Landing comes from the Brunswick- Topsham Water District (BTWD) and has been confirmed safe to drink. The public water supply has not been impacted by this incident. Homes and businesses served by the BTWD can safely use the water.

The Maine CDC advises the public to exercise caution and abstain from any recreational activities (such as swimming, boating, and wading) that may come into contact with the foam or waters until the possible effects of the AFFF release on waterbodies in the vicinity have been thoroughly evaluated.

The public should avoid contact with foam. If any foam is observed outside of restricted areas, residents in the spill site area should report it by calling: 207-844-8040. This number is to report AFFF foam only.

The next update is scheduled for Thursday, September 5, 2024, unless new information or additional test results become available before then.

For additional information, contact: David R. Madore, Deputy Commissioner david.madore@maine.gov