



YAKIMA TRAINING CENTER PFAS RESPONSE



A quarterly newsletter focused on informing the East Selah, Washington, community on Yakima Training Center's PFAS response

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POET Installations surpass 1 dozen in East Selah

YTC and U.S. Army Environmental Command contractors have reached double digits with Point of Entry Treatment (POET) system installations.

As of Jan. 31, 2024, a total of 15 POET systems had been installed in homes in the East Selah community. The Army is installing POET filtration systems for homes in the East Selah community where PFAS levels are above 70 parts per trillion.

A POET system is a whole-house, multi-stage filtration system that filters and disinfects all water entering the home. The filtration systems are specifically designed for each home. The Army provides continued monitoring and upkeep of these systems while it continues to address PFAS in

drinking water in East Selah through the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) process.

The Army samples water from all POET systems multiple times during the first year following installation to assure the system is working as intended and to determine the needed frequency for changing filters at each home. Following the first year, water samples are taken quarterly from the system as part of its continued monitoring and maintenance.

After installation, the system remains government property and the federal government retains the responsibility for its upkeep, which includes filter replacement, replenishment of the water softener salt supply, cleaning UV filters and other



Army contractors install a Point of Entry Treatment (POET) system in the garage of an East Selah home. The Army is installing POET systems in homes where PFAS levels are at or above 70 ppt.

necessary maintenance.

The system is monitored for eight weeks before it is certified for use. The Army delivers bottled water to the residence until laboratory results of the

water samples verify the POET system is effectively removing PFAS from the drinking water. A reserve supply of water is also provided in case the system requires any repairs.

ROEs Sent to 8 Well Owners

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently mailed eight Rights of Entry (ROE) agreements to owners of well systems that serve multiple residences.

The agreements allow the Army to install and maintain the treatment systems, which filter PFOA/PFOS from drinking water. They also allow for the continued monitoring of the drinking water before and after instal-

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Officials Begin Planning Process for Design, Installation of Treatment Systems for Multi-Connection Wells

YTC, U.S. Army Environmental Command (USAEC), and the Army Corps of Engineers are working with Yakima Health District to ensure that well systems with multiple connections receive the best treatment to remove PFAS from drinking water.

On Jan. 10, officials from YTC, USAEC, and the Yakima Health District visited eight multi-connection water systems in East Selah to start working on a plan to determine the work needed to install

systems to treat PFAS in the water. Multi-connection systems require additional considerations for design, treatment, and effectiveness than what is required of a single-home Point of Entry Treatment (POET) system.

YTC and USAEC are working with the Corps of Engineers to write a request for proposals for a contract to build the larger treatment systems. A target date to award a contract is the summer of 2024.

Planning for the larger treatment systems will require several more site visits of the multi-connection well systems. During those visits, officials will be conducting additional water quality sampling, pressure testing, and overall assessment of the condition of existing wells.

The goal is to ensure the new treatment systems will deliver quality drinking water and adequate water pressure at all residents connected to a multi-connection well.



ROEs, POET Design Letters to be Focus of March 16 Informational Meeting in Selah

YTC will host an informational meeting for East Selah residents 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, March 16, at the Selah Civic Center, 216 S. 1st Street, Selah. The focus of the meeting will be to answer questions about Rights of Entry (ROE) agreements and Point of Entry Treatment (POET) design letters that residents have received.

The Army is also planning to have POET system components on display to give residents an up-close look at the



YTC has scheduled an informational meeting, March 16, at the Selah Civic Center to answer questions on Rights of Entry agreements and design letters for Point of Entry Treatment systems. YTC is planning quarterly meetings this year to keep residents updated on its PFAS response.

treatment systems being installed in East Selah homes where PFAS levels are above 70 parts per trillion.

ROEs have been mailed out to several residents in the East Selah community, and the meeting will allow

residents to bring in their signed agreement and to ask additional questions of the officials at the meeting.

YTC plans to host informational meetings at the Selah Civic Center on a quarterly basis.

Continued from page 1 ROEs sent to owners of multi-connection wells in East Selah

lation of the treatment system.

This round of ROEs will start the process for YTC to begin jointly planning the design of multi-connection systems with the Corps of Engineers and the Yakima Health District.

Designs for multi-connection well systems require review and approval from the Yakima Health District.

During the process, YTC is also continuing installation of Point of Entry Treatment (POET) systems in single-family residences.

An informational meeting is scheduled March 16, at the Selah Civic Center to provide additional information on ROEs.

For questions on treatment systems, or the YTC PFAS response, email: YTCPFAS@army.mil.

USGS Conducting Groundwater Study In and Around YTC

At the request of the Army, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is conducting an independent study in the East Selah area to provide a better understanding of the geology and groundwater-flow system.

The study will provide information to assist with current and future efforts to respond to the spread of PFAS substances and support subsequent groundwater-related issues in the area. The ongoing study is expected to continue through 2025.

The study includes three primary tasks: collection of information on groundwater levels, water-chemistry sampling and analysis, and development of a conceptual ground-water model.

The model will use all information from the study to describe the most important characteristics of ground-water in the area, and where and how it moves, which is necessary for mitigating and remediating groundwater contamination.

As part of the study, USGS analyzes

water samples from about 100 on-and off-post locations for a group of chemical parameters that provide information about the age, sources, and movement of groundwater. The parameters analyzed are not drinking-water contaminants and are used to help better understand the regional groundwater system and support effective management of groundwater-related issues in the area.

The USGS conducts quarterly field work as part of the study.

The results of the study will be publicly available and published online on the USGS National Water Information System and will also be shared on the YTC website. A copy will also be provided with other YTC PFAS information at the Yakima Public Library.

The USGS serves the nation as an independent fact-finding agency that collects, monitors, analyzes, and provides scientific understanding about natural resource and natural hazard conditions, issues, and problems. Because it has no



USGS employees feed a pump into a monitoring well on YTC to take samples as part of an ongoing study to better understand the geology and groundwater-flow.

regulatory or management mandate, the USGS provides impartial science that serves the needs our changing world. It is USGS policy to conduct its activities and make the results of its scientific investigations available in a manner that would best serve the whole public, rather than the interest or benefit of any special group, corporation, or individual.



Army contractors Heather Habinyak (front) and Michelle Schwartz, of Tanaq Environmental LLC, collect water samples as part of a regularly scheduled round of PFAS testing in the East Selah community.

6th Phase of Sampling Completed

Army contractors recently took samples at 28 East Selah homes as part of a regularly scheduled round of PFAS testing in the area. The Army tests drinking water in the area outside of Yakima Training Center as part of an ongoing PFAS remedial investigation.

The samples were taken in a sixth phase of testing in mid-December 2023, and results were shared with the homeowners in late January. The sampling returned one additional well with PFOS/PFOA results above 70 parts per trillion.

The Army has installed 15 Point of Entry Treatment (POET) systems at homes in East Selah to filter PFAS from drinking water and are in various stages of installation of two others. As POET installations continue, the Army will also continue testing different wells on a regular basis.

A seventh phase of PFAS-level sampling is scheduled to take place in March. A fact sheet on how to read the laboratory results can be obtained at YTC PFAS page at: www.dvidshub.net/r/es2j62.

ECC Adds Environmental Scientist to YTC PFAS Response Team

Editor's Note: Environmental Chemical Corporation (ECC) has added a local member to its PFAS remediation investigation team at YTC. We've asked her to introduce herself.

Hello everyone! My name is Marisa Allen, and I will be working at YTC under Audra Balson as an Environmental Scientist for ECC. You will see me around the base mostly working on sampling POET systems and overseeing POET installs.

Some fun facts about me! I just moved from Connecticut to Washington in early January, so I am quite new to the area. I am currently

living in Ellensburg and enjoying it so far. I am a recent graduate of the University of New Hampshire where I earned my bachelor of science degree in Environmental Sciences and Ecosystems. I started my degree at the University of Oregon but besides my year there I have spent my life on the East Coast. I am excited for a change of scenery and to explore the local area once the weather warms up!

I very much look forward to working with and meeting you all in the coming days! If you have any questions/concerns or just want to say hello my email is Mcallen@ecc.net.



Marisa Allen, ECC Environmental Scientist

Army Collaborating with Multiple Agencies on PFAS Response

The Army continues to investigate PFAS contamination originating from YTC and is collaborating with other federal, state, county, and city officials to work toward developing a sustainable, long-term solution for affected drinking water.

The group's first meeting to discuss future long-term drinking water solutions was Nov. 14, 2023. The discussion focused on water sampling and ways the Army could collaborate more with the state and county on multi-connection well systems that serve multiple residences.

Representatives from the City of Selah, Washington State Department of Health, Washington State Department of Ecology, Army Corps of Engineers, Defense Health Agency and other Army agencies attended.

A second meeting will be scheduled this spring.

ROEs Required for POET Installation

Before installation of a water treatment system can begin, the Army must obtain a Right Of Entry (ROE) permission from each homeowner.

The ROE allows the Army to install the system and have continued access for its ongoing monitoring and upkeep.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Seattle District's Technical Resources Branch prepares the ROEs being provided to East Selah, Washington, residents. ROEs require a multistep process before they are provided to the landowner for signature.

According to the Corps of Engineers, several steps are taken to ensure the accuracy of each document based on publicly available ownership information.

The ROEs are completed in an order of priority provided to the Corps of Engineers by the Army Environmental Command.

Eight ROEs were recently sent to owners of wells that serve multiple residences.

For questions regarding the ROE process, contact Aiyana Stringer via phone at (360) 393-0617, or email at: Aiyana.S.Stringer@usace.army.mil.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
<p>Does the Army still use AFFF?</p>	<p>The Army prohibits the use of AFFF for maintenance, testing and training on its installations and only uses AFFF for emergency responses. Since 2017, the Army has treated any release of PFAS-containing AFFF as a spill and has required immediate response to limit environmental effects. In January 2023, the military approved a new PFAS-free version of fire-fighting foam appropriate for combating aviation fuel fires and in September 2023 approved the first replacement foam. The Army is now beginning the complex task of replacing all AFFF in its vehicles, facilities, and equipment with fluorine-free firefighting formulations. Congress prohibited the use of fluorinated aqueous film-forming foam on military installations after Oct. 1, 2024. This prohibition does not apply to firefighting foam that is used solely onboard oceangoing vessels. More information can be found at the DoD PFAS website: https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/eer/ecc/pfas/index.html.</p>
<p>What happens after the Point of Entry Treatment (POET) system is installed?</p>	<p>Once a POET system is installed, the Army will continue a robust monitoring schedule to ensure effective treatment to remove PFAS. The system will be sampled multiple times during the first year after installation. Quarterly sampling will continue through the third year, and maintenance and monitoring will continue until a more permanent treatment solution is available.</p>
<p>Why haven't I heard anything about starting a Restoration Advisory Board?</p>	<p>Since initial community meetings over a year ago, only 11 people showed initial interest in being part of a Restoration Advisory Board (RAB). There was no response to the article asking for volunteers in the July or November YTC PFAS Response Newsletters and no one filled out an interest form to volunteer during the August 2023 Open House/Community Meeting. In order to represent the diverse community, a variability of perspectives, people, and backgrounds is needed. East Selah community members interested in starting a RAB should contact Paul Noel at paul.e.noel6.civ@army.mil.</p>
<p>Will the Army be reassessing who is eligible for alternative water after the EPA sets its federal PFAS regulation next year?</p>	<p>The Department of Defense respects and values the public comment process on this proposed nationwide drinking water rule and looks forward to the clarity that a final regulatory drinking water standard for PFAS will provide. In anticipation of the final standard that the Environmental Protection Agency expects to publish in 2024, the Department is assessing what actions DoD can take to be prepared to incorporate EPA's final regulatory standard into our current cleanup process, such as reviewing our existing data and conducting additional sampling where necessary. In addition, DoD will incorporate nationwide PFAS cleanup guidance, issued by EPA and applicable to all owners and operators under the federal cleanup law, as to when to provide alternate water when PFAS are present.</p>
<p>Who will be responsible for the POET systems once they are installed?</p>	<p>The POET system will remain property of the federal government, and the Army will be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the systems. Maintenance activities will include replacement of filtration tanks, cleaning or replacing the UV disinfection unit, and checking for proper valve settings and pressure.</p>
<p>I purchased a filtration system for my home. How can I get reimbursed for that system?</p>	<p>At this time, there is no funding method to provide direct compensation for resident expenditures; however, there is a system through which someone can file a claim against the government for losses associated with military activities. For more information about this process for YTC, please contact the Claims Division, Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, at 253-477-1878.</p>
<p>Will the Army build a shed for my POET system if I prefer?</p>	<p>The Army creates a design plan specific to each residence that allows for optimal operation and life of the system. In most cases, the best location for the POET system is inside the home, garage, or existing well house.</p>



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