

Reducing PFAS in Your Drinking Water with a Home Filter

In April 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized the first-ever national drinking water standards for several PFAS in drinking water. If you learn there are PFAS in your drinking water, then you may consider installing a home filter. A home filter could be an effective way to reduce PFAS levels, and there are a variety of types of filters available at many different price points.

What are PFAS?

PFAS are a category of chemicals that have been used in industry and consumer products since the 1940s. PFAS repel oil and water and resist heat, making them useful in a variety of products, including nonstick cookware and food packaging, waterproof clothing, stain-resistant furniture, and firefighting foam. People can be exposed to PFAS in a variety of ways, and PFAS in drinking water can be a significant portion of a person's total PFAS exposure. Exposure to PFAS may lead to health problems, so reducing your exposure to PFAS lowers your risk for these health problems.

Learn About PFAS in Your Water and Decide if a Filter is Right for You

Many public water systems already have test results for PFAS available. First, contact your local water provider to find out which PFAS, if any, are in your drinking water. You can also search EPA's [database of PFAS water system test results](#) or EPA's map-based [PFAS Analytic Tools](#) to see if your water system has been tested as part of EPA's monitoring program. If PFAS have not been measured in your water, or if PFAS have been measured but are below federal limits, a filter may not be useful to you.

Your state [environmental protection agency or health department](#) may also have more information about PFAS in your drinking water and recommendations for actions you can take.

Types of Filters

There are many water filters on the market, but not all filters address PFAS. If you choose to use a filter, be sure to get one that is certified to remove or reduce PFAS in drinking water. As of April 2024, filter certifications focus on removing the chemicals PFOA and PFOS, which are two specific types of PFAS. A filter can cost as little as \$20 or more than \$1,000 (not including maintenance costs), with variations between types, brands, and whether they are pitcher filters, installed on your faucet, or for your entire home. There may also be maintenance- and disposal-related costs that also vary between filters. Here are some of the types of filters that are currently available and can be effective at reducing PFAS:

- **Charcoal (Granular Activated Carbon or GAC):** These filters use carbon to trap chemicals as water passes through them.
- **Reverse Osmosis (RO) Systems:** Reverse osmosis is a process that forces water through an extremely thin barrier that separates chemicals from the water.
- **Ion Exchange Resins:** Resins are tiny beads that act like powerful magnets that attract and hold the contaminated materials from passing through the water system.

Check for Certification

Certification by an independent entity is an assurance that the filter works as the manufacturer says it does. To

find a certified filter, look on the product packaging for a certification by an accredited body. There are currently five American National Standards Institute (ANSI)-accredited third-party certification bodies that evaluate drinking water filters for PFAS reduction capabilities. Each has a registered trademark that is used on certified products. Links to these certification bodies are provided below.

To make sure the filter you select is certified:

- First, check the product packaging for certification to “NSF/ANSI 53” or NSF/ANSI 58” for PFAS reduction.
- If in doubt, check the certification body’s product directory website for testing information or to see if the product has been certified to treat PFAS (such as PFOA and PFOS) found in drinking water. The certification body’s mark will typically be on the packaging. See the table below for links to a product directory for each certification body.
- If still in doubt, you can contact the certification body directly from their websites.

A filter may list claims for PFAS reduction on its outer packaging, in a performance data sheet within the package, or on the manufacturer’s website.

It's important to note that the current certification standards for PFAS filters (as of April 2024) do not yet indicate that a filter will remove PFAS down to the levels EPA has now set for a drinking water standard. EPA is working with standard-setting bodies to update their filter certifications to match EPA’s new requirements. In the meantime, remember that reducing levels of PFAS in your water is an effective way to limit your exposure.

Maintenance is Critical

Filters are only effective if they are maintained according to the manufacturer’s instructions. Not replacing a filter by the manufacturer’s recommend schedule can increase your risk of exposure to PFAS.

For More Information on Certified Filters

Certification Body	Link to Product Listing
CSA Group	https://www.csagroup.org/testing-certification/product-listing/
IAPMO R&T, Inc.	https://pld.iapmo.org/
NSF	https://info.nsf.org/Certified/DWTU/
UL	https://productiq.ulprospector.com/en
WQA	https://find.wqa.org/find-products#/

For more information on the science behind different types of PFAS filters, visit EPA’s website [here](#).