

MEETING OF ENVIRONMENT MINISTERS

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR PFAS

The Commonwealth, state and territory environment ministers have endorsed Australia's first PFAS National Environmental Management Plan.

Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of chemicals that have been used in applications such as fire-fighting foams, textile treatments for upholstery and clothing, paper products and electroplating.

Some PFAS have been globally identified as chemicals of high concern, particularly due to their environmental persistence and bioaccumulation.

Environment ministers agreed in November 2016 that all jurisdictions have a critical role to play in developing nationally consistent standards for managing environmental contamination by PFAS.

The plan provides valuable guidance around storage, re-use and disposal of contaminated material, which will facilitate proactive decision-making for contaminated site management, including remediation.

The plan recommends practices to assess sites and address contamination found.

The PFAS NEMP includes a program of future work that is expected to address key gaps by mid-2018, as well as other important gaps through longer-term research activities.

Environment Ministers acknowledged the leadership of the Heads of EPAs and the Victorian EPA in delivering the plan.

The PFAS National Environmental Management Plan can be accessed at the following website:
http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/pfas_nemp.