Fact Sheet: Addressing PFAS in Response to the ITC Tank Fire

Addressing per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) is one of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) top priorities and the Agency is actively working through the Unified Command to address any PFAS contamination associated with the use of Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) in response to the fire at the Intercontinental Terminals Company (ITC) Deer Park facility near Houston, Texas. AFFF is an effective tool in fighting fires, though certain varieties of AFFF may contain PFAS chemicals. PFAS is a group of man-made chemicals that have been widely used in everyday products since the 1940s and as such can be found in the environment. There is evidence that exposure to PFAS can lead to adverse human health effects.

As part of EPA's response efforts, the Agency is taking the following steps to address PFAS:

- First, EPA is working with ITC and first responders through the Unified Command to collect information about the different types of foams that were used to fight the fire. This information will help the Agency further refine its efforts to sample for and address any PFAS contamination in the area.
- Second, on March 21, 2019, the day after the fire was initially extinguished, EPA began monitoring surface water for PFAS (including PFOA and PFOS) in both Tucker Bayou and Buffalo Bayou. The Agency expects to receive and make public the first round of sampling results in the coming days.
- Third, EPA, through an Administrator Order issued on March 23, has required ITC to conduct surface water sampling for contaminants, including PFAS. The order also requires ITC to remove spilled material and take actions to prevent it from migrating farther downstream.
- Fourth, EPA is working to develop and implement a robust surface water sampling plan that could include sampling for additional PFAS chemicals. EPA will rely on all available tools and methods to provide as much information to the public as possible about PFAS levels in local waterways.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has reported that drinking water provided by the local water utility is [HYPERLINK "https://www.tceq.texas.gov/news/releases/joint-release-unified-command-working-to-assess-water-quality-near-itc-site"] by the incident. TCEQ has also provided [HYPERLINK "https://www.tceq.texas.gov/news/releases/joint-release-unified-command-working-to-assess-water-quality-near-itc-site"] for Deer Park residents who use wells north of Texas 225 on testing their water.

EPA will continue to engage with the Unified Command throughout the response on any PFAS-related issues.

EPA's PFAS Action Plan

On February 14, 2019, EPA announced the first-ever PFAS Action Plan. This historic plan responds to extensive public interest and input the EPA has received, including at the Agency's May 2018 National Leadership Summit and subsequent visits to a number of states across the nation. The Action Plan represents the first time the EPA has built a national, multi-media, multi-program, research, management, and risk communication plan to address an emerging chemical of concern like PFAS. The Action Plan identifies both short-term solutions for addressing PFAS chemicals and long-term strategies

that will help provide the tools and technologies states, tribes, and local communities need to clean up sites and provide clean and safe drinking water to their residents.

For additional information: [HYPERLINK "http://www.epa.gov/pfas"]