

California files suit over 'forever chemicals' in water

November 11 2022, by Cara Murez



The state of California is suing several companies for their role in

manufacturing "forever chemicals."

The [lawsuit](#) filed Thursday also claims that the companies, including 3M and DuPont, covered up the harm their products, commonly known as PFAS, were causing to the state's environment and to people.

"PFAS are as ubiquitous in California as they are harmful," State Attorney General Rob Bonta said in a [news release](#).

"As a result of a decades-long campaign of deception, PFAS are in our waters, our clothing, our houses and even our bodies," Bonta said. "The damage caused by 3M, DuPont and other manufacturers of PFAS is nothing short of staggering, and without drastic action, California will be dealing with the harms of these toxic chemicals for generations. Today's [lawsuit](#) is the result of a years-long investigation that found that the manufacturers of PFAS knowingly violated state consumer protection and environmental laws. We won't let them off the hook for the pernicious damage done to our state."

In addition to 3M and DuPont, the state is suing 16 smaller companies for their work with compounds used in firefighting foam, nonstick frying pans, cleaning sprays, water-repellent sports gear, stain-resistant rugs, cosmetics and more.

Both DuPont and 3M responded to the lawsuit.

Minnesota-based 3M said in a statement that it "acted responsibly in connection with products containing PFAS and will defend its record of environmental stewardship," the *Associated Press* reported.

DuPont said its company has changed in past years.

"In 2019, DuPont de Nemours was established as a new multi-industrial

specialty products company. DuPont de Nemours has never manufactured PFOA, PFOS or firefighting foam. While we don't comment on pending litigation, we believe these complaints are without merit, and the latest example of DuPont de Nemours being improperly named in litigation," the Delaware-based [company](#) said in a statement, the *AP* reported.

The chemicals don't degrade or do so very slowly, and they have been found in waterways and human bloodstreams.

The companies marketed products with PFAS despite knowing their role in causing cancer, developmental defects and other [health issues](#), Bonta said.

Cleanup costs and penalties in the lawsuit could reach hundreds of millions of dollars, Bonta said.

The lawsuit is the first to be filed statewide over PFAS contamination and alleges the companies violated state consumer protection and environmental laws. It also points to a U.S. [federal law](#) that makes it possible to seek repayment for cleanup of hazardous substances in soil and water, the *AP* reported.

The chemicals are so dangerous they can harm [human health](#) even at undetectable levels, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said in June.

The agency has invited states and territories to apply for funds under the new bipartisan infrastructure law meant to target contaminants in drinking water. The \$1 billion can be used for technical assistance, water quality testing, contractor training and installation of centralized treatment, the *AP* reported.

More information: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has more on [PFAS](#).

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