

2025 agency updates: East Selah PFAS contamination from Yakima Training Center



The view west from an area in East Selah with high levels of PFAS contamination in groundwater.

Background

For years, the U.S. Army's Yakima Training Center conducted exercises using firefighting foam that contained **PFAS ("forever chemicals")**. PFAS chemicals are a problem because they can build up in our bodies when we're exposed, which can increase our risk for negative health impacts. PFAS from the foam leached into groundwater, making nearby drinking water unsafe.

We (Ecology) have repeatedly asked the Army to:

- **Test well water, surface water, and livestock.**
- **Share its data.**
- **Create a thorough cleanup plan.**
- **Provide clean drinking water to everyone affected in East Selah.**

The Army is required to do these under state and federal laws. While the Army has not fully responded to these requests, we are working with the state Department of Health and Yakima Health District to provide answers and resources where we can.

Well testing and filtration systems

The Yakima Health District tested private wells in 2024 and 2025. The results helped people determine whether their water was safe to drink. The Health District is providing **free, certified under-the-sink filtration systems** to homes with PFAS levels that

don't meet drinking water standards. These standards are the levels set to protect your health if you drank the water every day for many years.

The Health District is also exploring **long-term drinking water solutions**, which includes potentially developing a public water system in East Selah.

Livestock testing and health guidance

The Department of Health **tested 26 samples of home-raised eggs and meats** from 8 households in East Selah. Overall, they found that home-raised livestock products from animals that drank contaminated well water can be a significant way people in East Selah are exposed to PFAS. **Each participating household received individualized health guidance based on their test results from the Department of Health.**

Results from the project included:

- Six households had eggs tested. Five were told to limit their consumption. Three were recommended to significantly restrict egg consumption to 0 to 2 eggs per week, per person.
- Four households had home-raised meat (beef, chicken, turkey, or pork) tested. One household was recommended to restrict meat consumption.

Surface water testing

Ecology did **two rounds of surface water sampling** in 2024, once in the spring and once in the fall. We collected samples from 19 locations, including:

- Yakima River at multiple spots upstream and downstream from the training center.
- Elton Pond.
- Roza Irrigation District canals.
- A stock watering pond.
- A wetland drainage area.

Our results showed that in some areas, PFAS levels did not meet drinking water standards. This included parts of the Yakima River below Harrison Road bridge. While the test results may confirm what people have already suspected, formally gathering data helps us precisely map the contamination so we know who's affected.

Share your thoughts with decision-makers

Ecology Director Casey Sixkiller visited several East Selah residents earlier this summer. After hearing their frustrations, he promised to advocate for them and report back with more time to listen to their needs. We also hosted two listening sessions for East Selah residents in 2023, where residents asked us to conduct testing, provide health guidance, and ultimately work toward long-term solutions with the Army.

We hosted an update and community feedback session on **August 25, 2025**, to follow through on our promise to return and to report back on what was

asked of us at the last listening session. **We invited the Army and local, state, and federal elected officials to attend so that these key decision-makers can hear directly from you what help is needed for East Selah.**

If you did not attend or want to share more thoughts, **complete our survey to help us understand what support and resources you are still waiting for.** We'll share your responses with the agencies and elected officials who can advocate for resources and take action.



Complete the survey:
Scan the QR code or visit
bit.ly/PFAS-form.

Learn more about the health impacts of PFAS



Visit the Department of Health's website:
Scan the QR code or visit
doh.wa.gov/pfas.

Feel free to contact us with your questions and concerns:

Kurt Walker
509-934-0386
Kurt.Walker@ecy.wa.gov

ADA Accessibility

The Department of Ecology is committed to providing people with disabilities access to our information and services by meeting or exceeding the requirements of state and federal laws. To request an ADA accommodation, contact us by phone at 360-407-6700, by email at hwtrpubs@ecy.wa.gov, or visit ecology.wa.gov/ADA. For relay services, dial 711 or call us through your preferred provider.

Language Services

We offer translation and interpretation services for free. To request them, email Kurt.Walker@ecy.wa.gov or call 509-934-0386. If you call, ask for an interpreter to be connected with one.

Ofrecemos servicios de traducción e interpretación sin costo. Para solicitarlos, envíe un correo electrónico a Kurt.Walker@ecy.wa.gov o llame al 509-934-0386. Si llama, pida que le conecten con un interprete.