



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

NEWS

Statement from the MWRD regarding the July 31 Chicago Tribune article

8/1/22

Established in 1889, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois. The MWRD has wastewater treatment and biosolids programs that are heavily regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IL EPA).

MWRD water reclamation plants accept wastewater from residents and businesses located in Cook County. The MWRD does not manufacture or create any of the materials or substances contained within the wastewater that our treatment plants receive.

As part of the regulated wastewater community, our biosolids program follows all applicable rules and regulations of the U.S. EPA and IL EPA. With regards to health concerns, the U.S. EPA is currently doing a risk assessment on PFAS substances. This risk assessment is expected to be completed by 2024. The MWRD continues to follow and contribute to the science and will further our monitoring efforts once U.S. EPA-approved testing methods for PFAS are approved.

Farmers in our farmland application program voluntarily use MWRD biosolids on fields that do not grow crops for human consumption. Additionally, a Food and Drug Administration survey found no evidence of widespread occurrence of any PFAS in food grown or produced in areas associated with environmental PFAS contamination.

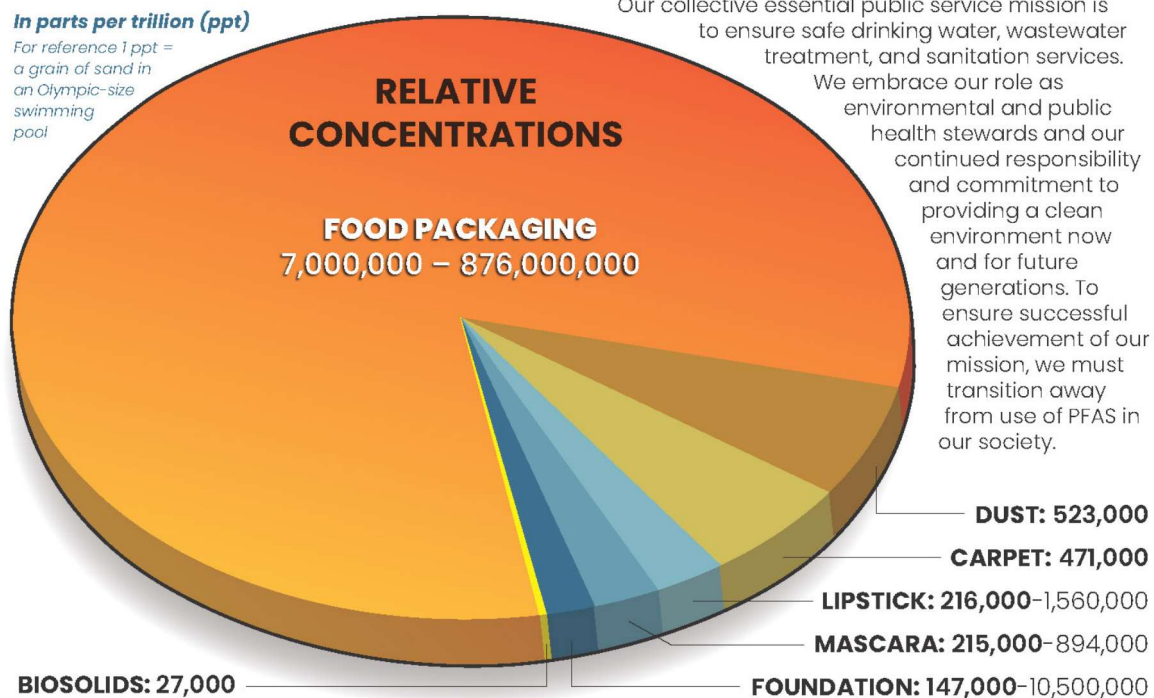
As stewards of the water environment, we take great pride in protecting the health and safety of the public. As a society, we all must adjust our daily habits and reduce our use of products that are known to contain harmful chemicals.

PFAS BY THE NUMBERS

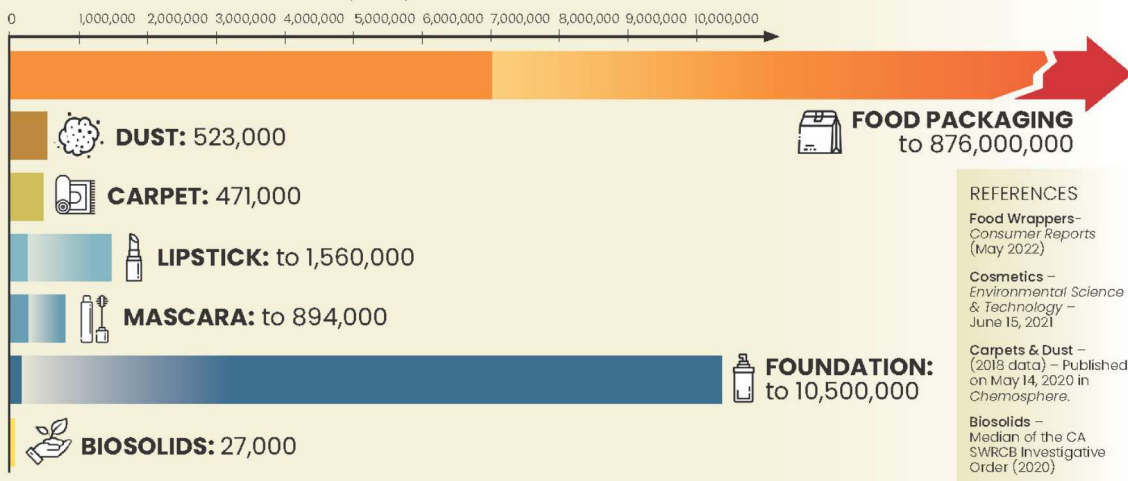
Per and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of manmade fluorinated compounds that have been in commercial use since the 1940's and are abundant in today's society. These chemicals are widely used for their resistance to heat, water, and oil. PFAS are found in every American household, and in products as shown in the pie chart with typical concentrations. Entities providing essential public services such as safe drinking water, wastewater treatment, water recycling, biosolids recycling, and municipal solid waste management are not "users" or "producers" of PFAS but receive them as a function of their prevalent use in society.

In parts per trillion (ppt)

For reference 1 ppt = a grain of sand in an Olympic-size swimming pool



RELATIVE RANGES in parts per trillion



Source: CASA

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District of Greater Chicago**

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