Informe Express
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Estados Unidos regulará los químicos perennes (PFAS) en el agua potable

Impacto para el sector de agua, saneamiento e infraestructura:

La Agencia de Protección Ambiental (EPA por sus siglas en inglés) de los Estados Unidos publicó dos nuevas regulaciones para proteger la salud pública de las sustancias per y polifluoroalquiladas (PFAS por sus siglas en inglés) o también conocidas como "químicos perennes" en el agua potable.

Según la EPA, entre los efectos de las PFAS en la salud están: cáncer, afectación a tiroides, impacto en el sistema inmune y bajo peso al nacer.

La primera acción consiste en la Quinta Regla de Monitoreo de Contaminantes Desregulados (UCMR 5) que exige la toma de muestras en el agua potable de unos 30 sustancias contaminantes y litio entre 2023 y 2025.

La segunda acción es la emisión de las Determinaciones Regulatorias Finales para la Cuarta Lista de Contaminantes que regularán a dos contaminantes sulfonato de perfluorooctano (PFOS) y ácido perfluorooctanoico (PFOA) en agua potable y desregula a otras 6 sustancias.

Estas dos regulaciones apuntan a mejorar la comprensión sobre los efectos de estos contaminantes y reducir los riesgos potenciales causados por estas sustancias químicas.

Esta iniciativa será replicada por otros países para garantizar el acceso a agua segura.

EPA Takes Action to Address PFAS in Drinking Water

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued two actions to protect public health by addressing per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in drinking water, highlighting the agency's commitment to address these long-lasting "forever chemicals" that can enter drinking water supplies and impact communities across the United States. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to addressing PFAS in the nation's drinking water and will build on these actions by advancing science and using the agency's authorities to protect public health and the environment.

"All people need access to clean and safe drinking water. One way that EPA is committed to keeping our communities safe is by addressing PFAS," said EPA Acting Assistant Administrator for Water Radhika Fox. "These actions will underpin better science, better future regulation, and improved public health protections."

Taken together, these two actions will support the agency's efforts to better understand and ultimately reduce the potential risks caused by this broad class of chemicals. EPA is reproposing the Fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 5) to collect new data on PFAS in drinking water and the agency is reissuing final regulatory determinations for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). After a thorough review in accordance with Biden-Harris administration executive orders and other directives, the agency is reissuing these actions. EPA will build on them using a strong foundation of science while working to harmonize multiple authorities to address the impacts of PFAS on public health and the environment. EPA is also committed to a flexible approach and working collaboratively with states, tribes, water systems, and local communities that have been impacted by PFAS.

With the final Regulatory Determinations for PFOA and PFOS, EPA will move forward to implement the national primary drinking water regulation development process for these two PFAS. The Regulatory Determinations also outline avenues that the agency is considering to further evaluate additional PFAS chemicals and provide flexibility for the agency to consider groups of PFAS as supported by the best available science.

Additionally, the proposed UCMR 5 would provide new data that is critically needed to improve EPA's understanding of the frequency that 29 PFAS are found in the nation's drinking water systems and at what levels. EPA will accept public comment on the proposed UCMR 5 for 60 days, following publication in the Federal Register. EPA will also hold a virtual stakeholder meeting twice during the public comment period.

Fuente: Environmetal Protection Agency de Estados Unidos, 22-febrero-2021.