

Fomtec Technical Advice FTA No. 120

Fluorine free foams and PFAS

Statement:

Fomtec's fluorine-free product range does not contain any intentionally added fluorinated substances, i.e. PFAS and conforms to EU and US EPA legislation.

Possible sources of unintentional impurities can originate from the water used in production or as impurities in NON fluorine-containing raw materials we use. The water used in our production is potable water from the city of Helsingborg and is the same water distributed to the citizens of Helsingborg for their daily consumption. Impurities in non-fluorine-containing raw materials such as hydrocarbon surfactants and other additives are difficult to assess. Dafo Fomtec have contacted all our suppliers and has asked for statements and documentation from these that they have control over the possible contaminants in their fluorine-free additives

Clarification

It is very important to understand the reason why foam manufacturers and regulatory authorities distinguish between intentionally added PFAS and PFAS as an unavoidable or incalculable impurity.

The measurement of PFAS levels faces several difficulties:

Firstly, no analytical method exists which can measure levels down to zero, only to a stated detection level.

Secondly, PFAS are present globally, even in Arctic and Antarctic waters. Thus, water used in foam concentrates or their raw materials will give a very small level of impurity.

Thirdly, foam concentrates can be contaminated with PFAS when transferred into systems where there may be even minute residual quantities of PFAS.

Thus, although fluorine-free foams do not contain any intentionally added PFAS-substances, they may contain impurities emerging from the ubiquitous presence of PFAS all over the globe. The level permitted for SFFF is zero for intentionally added substances and the ambient impurities present in potable water used in manufacturing is unavoidable.