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POISONS


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Brunswick Landing head Kristine Logan says the community is looking for a scapegoat to blame for the AFFF accident and she's right.

Mainers have themselves to blame for trusting the navy. New data show 11,170 ppt of PFOS draining into the Androscoggin River from the Brunswick Sewer District.

By Pat Elder
September 16, 2024

https://www.militarypoisons.org/latest-news/brunswick-landing-head-kristine-logan-says-the-community-is-looking-for-a-scapegoat-to-blame-for-the-afff-accident-and-shes-right

Kristine Logan, Executive Director of the Midcoast Regional Development Authority

Although state and local officials in Brunswick, Maine are justified in their angry response to revelations that a fire suppression system at Brunswick Executive Airport was known to be faulty a year before it accidentally discharged 1,450 gallons of AFFF concentrate, they also have themselves to blame.

The property, called Brunswick Landing, includes the Brunswick Executive Airport, more than 750 units of housing and 158 businesses that employ over 2,500 people. These people have likely been exposed to deadly toxins since they first stepped foot on the property.

Brunswick Landing occupies the former Brunswick Naval Air Station, one of the most contaminated places in the United States. This same scenario is playing out in communities like Brunswick all over. The locals are hampered by their limited knowledge of the Navy's reckless behavior.

Local officials called for the dismissal of Kristine Logan, Executive Director of the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority after the massive leak of carcinogenic firefighting foam concentrate at the airport.

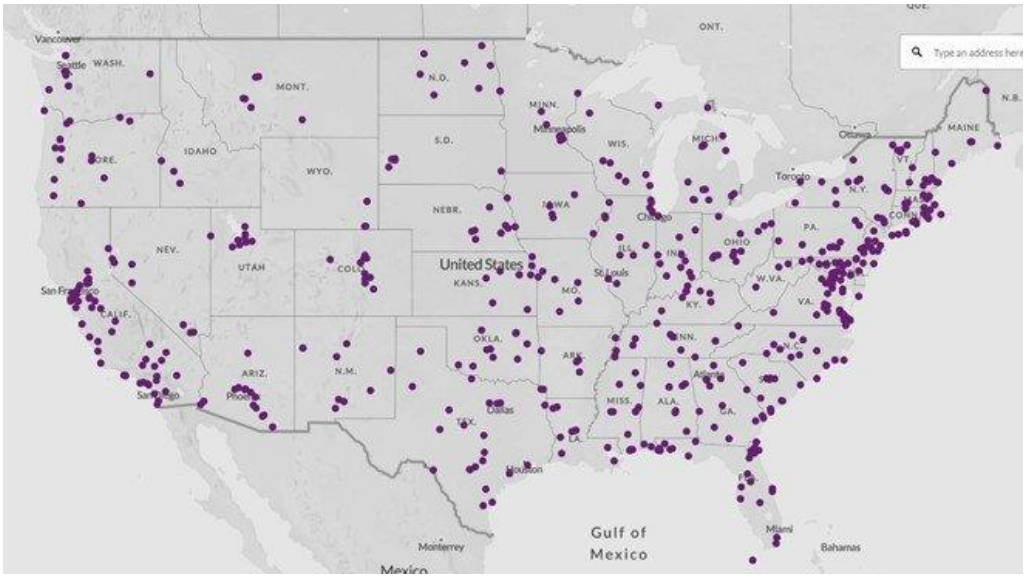
Logan is small change in all of this. Sure, she may have made some mistakes. We all do. I hope she can sleep well and that she knows this will pass. They navy has contaminated our land and our water and our air and poisoned the lives of millions of people for two generations. Kristine took the job in 2022.

Imagine if someone organized a Zoom call that brought together the Brunswick officials and their couterparts in these locations:

Willow Grove Navy Base, PA
Treasure Island, CA
Charleston Naval Base, SC
Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii
Patuxent River, MD
George AFB, CA
Bethpage, NY
Hunters Point, CA
Warminster, PA

I bet they would all learn a lot. Maybe the EPA could organize it. Just kidding.

Connecting the dots



PFAS at military bases and surrounding communities across the U.S.
August 9, 2024

– Environmental Working Group.

The contamination caused by all military branches is pervasive worldwide while each community muddles through on its own, with varying degrees of support from their municipalities, states, or national governments. It's important for the folks in Brunswick to

appreciate the same problems afflicting so many communities. Some have it much worse than Brunswick. **Click here** to find a base near you in the U.S. that is also suffering from the impact of PFAS contamination.

PFAS is poisoning the Androscoggin River

It will never be the same.

Carcinogenic PFAS chemicals pour into the Androscoggin River from the Brunswick Sewer District on August 27, 2024. – Water sampling and photo by Martha Spiess, Friends of Merrymeeting Bay

Sure, the river will look just as pretty after the bubbles pop, and it will be just as quiet and serene. It will smell fine too, but the river is profoundly contaminated. The sediment is toxic. "The invertebrates and all aquatic life are already living in a poisoned environment from legacy dioxins, PCBs and mercury. The recent PFAS discharge compounds our pollution problems, adding an element of longevity not present before" said Ed Friedman who chairs Friends of Merrymeeting Bay, a regional environmental nonprofit who has been testing Androscoggin water quality since 1990.

The entire food chain is poisoned, maybe forever.

Martha Spiess took a PFAS chemical snapsot of the Androscoggin River and it's not pretty. She found PFOS levels at 11,170 parts per trillion. "These is far and away higher than the usual 50-200 ppt total PFAS range typical of the sewer outfall" added Friedman.

Minnesota enforces a limit of .05 part per trillion in some of its lakes. PFOS is the last chemical you want in your water, even at a fraction of a part per trillion.

In ppt

Compound	Concentrate	Androscoggin
PFBA	22,400,000	5.3
PFPeA	34,700,000	22.9
PFBS	146,000,000	87.6
PFHxA	78,800,000	88.8
PFPeS	120,000,000	103.9
PFHpA	21,900,000	22.1
PFHxS	462,000,000	428.6
PFOA	69,000,000	65.3
6:2 FTS	41,300,000	1,305.1
PFHpS	94,000,000	109.1
PFOS	3,780,000,000	11,170.2
8:2 FTS	15,200,000	75.8
PFNS	6,320,000	183.2
PFDS	2,100,000	6.4
Subtotal	**4,893,720,000**	**13,674.3**

Please examine the table here.

PFAS in the original concentrate - and the levels discharged into the Androscoggin River.

The **"Concentrate"** column designates the levels of these chemicals in the hangar when the AFFF first spilled out. Results are in parts per trillion. *(One part per trillion is something like one drop in 5 olympic-sized pools.)*

The **"Androscoggin"** column displays levels of PFAS flowing into the river from the Brunswick sewer district outfall. The sewer district treats sewage for a host of toxins, but not PFAS. They say they don't have the money to do things properly so the PFAS-laden liquid effluent is emptied into the river.

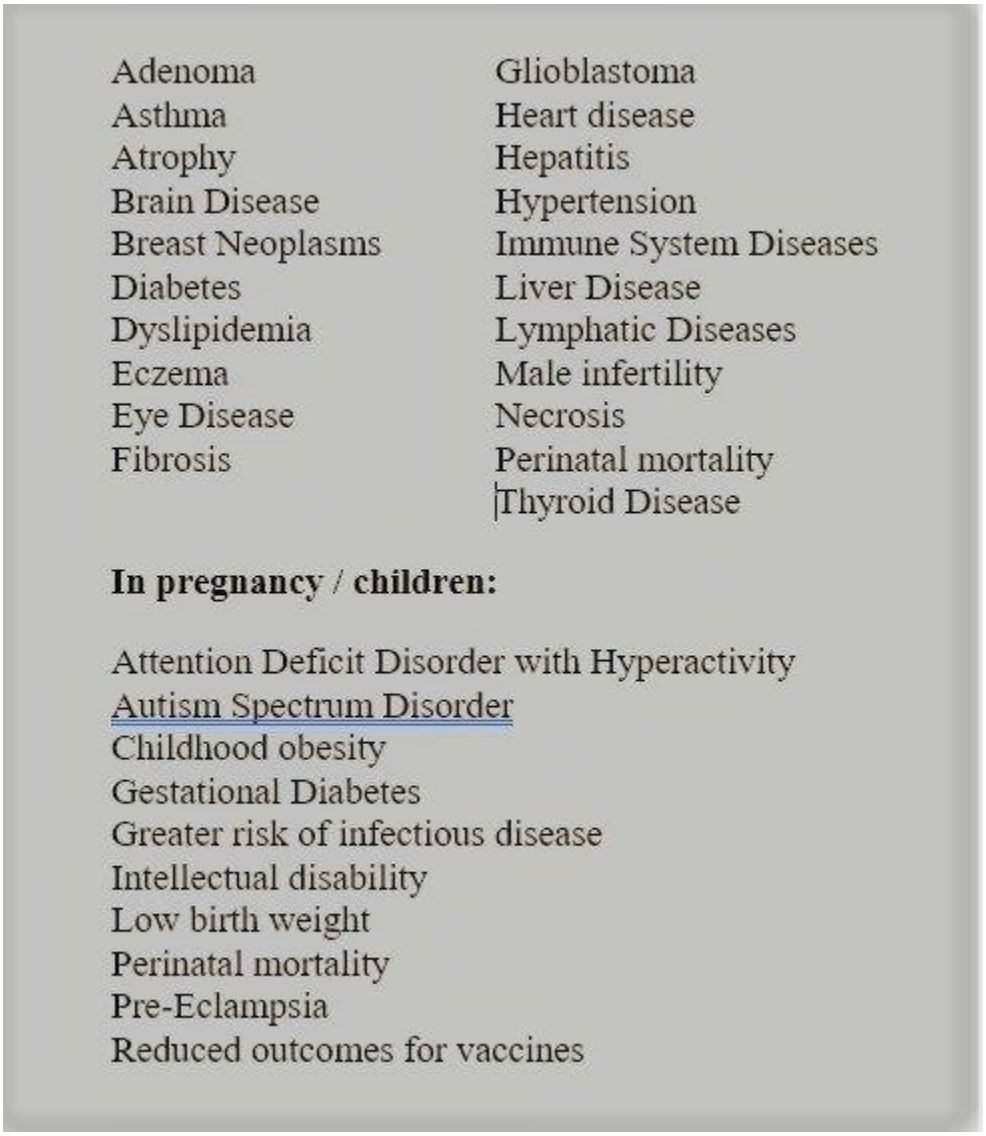
PFNA	---	1
PFDA	---	1.6
Gen X	---	ND
10:2 FTS	---	15.9
4:2 FTS	---	ND
5:3 FTCA	---	17.8
7:3 FTCA	---	1.2
8CI-PFOS	---	97.6
PBSA	---	40
FDUEA	---	ND
FHxSA	---	321.2
FOUEA	---	ND
MeFBSA	---	2.8
N-AP-FHxSA	---	2,239.3
N-MeFOSAA	---	3.4
PFDoS	---	2.3
PFECHS	---	1.2
PFOSA	---	25.1
PFPrS	---	29.9
Subtotal	---	**2,800.3**
Totals	**4,893,720,000**	**16,474.6**

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay detected many additional PFAS compounds the state ignored.

ND means no detect; "---" means not tested.

The PFOS in the concentrate comprised 77.2% of the total concentration. The PFOS draining into the river comprised 67.8% of the PFAS concentration.

Merrymeeting Bay detected 11,170.2 ppt of PFOS draining into the Androscoggin River. Our nonprofit friends reported 15 PFAS compounds totalling 2,800.3 ppt that the Maine DEP did not test.



Diseases and disorders associated with PFOS exposure.

Many of the compounds here bioaccumulate in fish and people. Search here to find their associated diseases and disorders.

Look for the contaminants listed above on the National Institute of Health's brilliant Pub Chem website.

The National Academies of the Sciences strongly recommends individuals in communities like Brunswick to have their blood tested for PFAS to begin the screening process for a host of diseases.

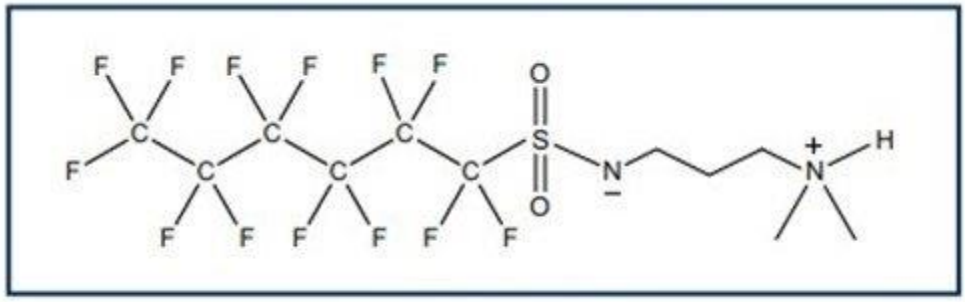
The National Academies of Sciences says there is an increased risk of adverse health effects if the total of these seven compounds exceeds 2 ng/mL in blood serum: PFOS, PFOA, PFHxS, PFNA, PFDA, PFUnDA, and MeFOSAA.

For patients with a serum PFAS concentration of 2 ng/mL or higher and less than 20 ng/mL, clinicians should encourage PFAS exposure reduction if a source of exposure is identified, especially for pregnant women. Within the usual standard of care clinicians should:

- Prioritize screening for dyslipidemia
- Screen for hypertensive disorders of pregnancy at all prenatal visits
- Screen for breast cancer

For patients with serum PFAS concentration of 20 ng/mL or higher, clinicians should perform the following tests during all routine visits:

- Conduct thyroid function testing (for patients over age 18) with serum thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH)
- Assess for signs and symptoms of kidney cancer (for patients over 45), including with urinalysis, and
- For patients over 15, assess for signs and symptoms of testicular cancer and ulcerative colitis.



N-AP-FHxSA

See if you can learn more about N-AP-FHxSA. Some scientists I talked to couldn't tell me much about it. Is it a carcinogen? Does it bioaccumulate in fish? How likely is it to be lifted into the air? Brunswick may be dealing with it for a very long time.

Lesson from Minnesota

The state of Minnesota has placed limits on PFOS in some of its lakes at .05 ppt. They do this because they understand the chemical aggressively bioaccumulates in fish and is harmful to people. After all, Minnesota is home to 3M.

Brunswick is in trouble. Minnesota says concentrations of PFOS can be more than 7,000 times higher in fish tissue than the water. This means we may expect to have fish with hundreds of thousands of parts per trillion of PFOS in their filet.

Meanwhile, the EPA has set a limit of 4 parts per trillion of PFOS in drinking water.

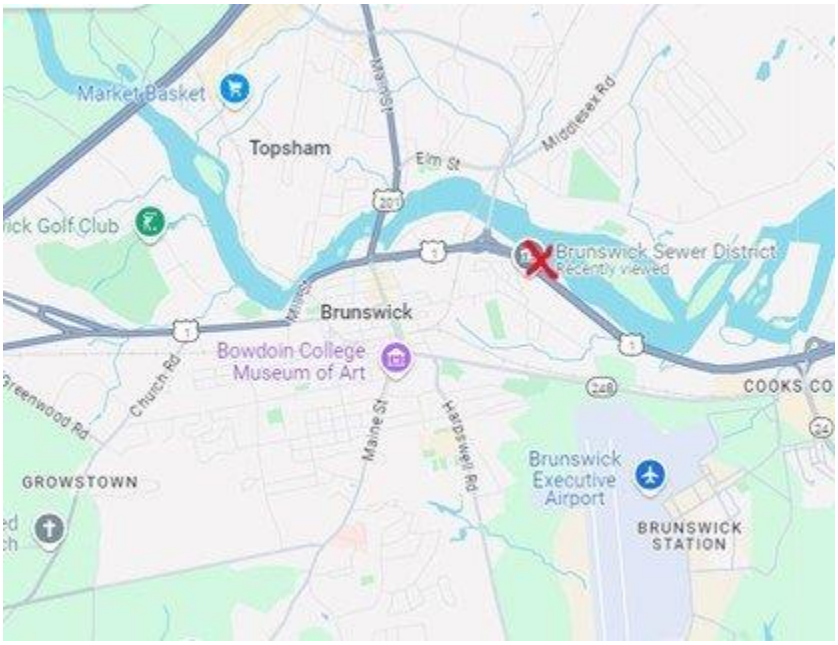
This is calamity. The chemicals coat the banks and the submerged sediment of the river. The carcinogens become airborne and settle into our lungs and in our homes as dust. This is likely the number one pathway of exposure to small children.

Does anyone know exactly what happens to the sludge produced from the plant? It can't be spread on farm fields or burned or buried without seriously threatening human life.

Sending the sludge out of state is criminal behavior! States that do so are preying on states that aren't smart enough to figure it out or are in the clutches of those unconcerned about human health. We're all in this together! God bless America.

Where is all the foam heading and what happens to it? It should be a matter of conscience for the Brunswick community.

This is one hell of a way to run a country. Call it environmental anarchy.



The red X shows the Brunswick Wastewater outflow into the Androscoggin River

Brunswick Sewer District General Manager Rob Pontau explained that treating PFAS is expensive. He said, "Treating PFAS requires advanced technology that the sewer district can't afford at the moment. He added that the district is not required to test for, monitor or treat PFAS."

"The key is to stop it at the source," Pontau said.

The Portland Herald reported, "Pontau, the general manager of the Brunswick Sewer District, said some of what drains into the sewer district will be removed from the wastewater and landfilled as sewage sludge."

Waste containing PFAS must not be landfilled!

Pontau says, "It's not possible to treat wastewater because of the amount of solids in it through a filter," "So that's really not an option for us at this time," he said.

There is an option!

The GAC filter system at Fleet Activities Yokosuka
may be seen in this photo I took from a boat in Tokyo Bay last year.

Brunswick can learn from the folks in Yokosuka, Japan.

On September 22, 2022, U.S. Navy Fleet Activities Yokosuka emptied 1,850 gallons of AFFF concentrate into the base's sewer system. Carcinogenic water containing 8,592 ppt of PFOS and 12,900 ppt of total PFAS emptied into Tokyo Bay. *(Brunswick's leak contained 1,450 gallons of concentrate, including 11,170 ppt of PFOS and a total of 16,474 ppt of PFAS draining into the river.)*

The depth of understanding and the organized outcry from locals in this amazing Japanese city shook the Navy into action. In a short while, the naval command installed a granular activated carbon (GAC) filtration system that immediately brought down the contamination to 4.6 ppt.

On October 21, 2023, a year after installing the filters, the Navy suddenly reported that the operation of the granular activated carbon filters had stopped. The Navy told the city the values of PFAS were "stable." Katsuaki Kamiji, Mayor of Yokosuka City, was outraged and complained to the military overlords.

Japanese authorities were left to speculate that the Navy did not want to bear the cost of operating the system and did not want to set the precedent for doing so at all current and former US military installations in Japan and perhaps, around the world.

It won't be easy for Brunswick.

Read this snippet from the Portland Press Herald's editorial, ***Brunswick spill a "never again' moment for Maine.***

"Now, the Brunswick story appears to be wending its way into an unseemly legal battle between the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority and the business that conducted the inspection — the business that warned Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority that "next steps," to mitigate the risk, would necessarily run to tens of thousands of dollars."

They forgot to mention the navy. I hate it when that happens. The navy is the real culprit. The others mentioned here are bit players - including so many towns eager to accept toxic pigs in pokes - in a tragicomedy playing out on stages around the world.

The town must study the history of this deadly chemical and the Navy's disregard for public health.

Brunswick and the state have some serious reckoning to do.

Lesson from the former Loring AFB

An article in The County newspaper in Limestone in December, 2023 on PFAS at the former Loring Air Force base contained numerous inaccuracies and important omissions regarding PFAS contamination caused by the Air Force at the former base. The same scenario is being repeated across the country. The reporter accurately relayed comments by the Air Force, the development authority, and – in this case - DG Fuels which planned to construct a $4 billion aviation fuel production facility on the former base.

Commonly accepted journalism is practiced without a great deal of historical research and analysis, often causing great public harm.

I traded emails with the reporter, and I received an email from Mike Dowd, the senior editor of the paper, who promised a follow up story which did a much better job. See Testing shows Loring PFAS contamination threatens water ways.

The most recent news story reports that a stream at Loring contained 11,000 parts per trillion of PFOS, the same level we just documented in the Androscoggin River.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection has documented fish with a million parts per trillion of PFOS near the old Loring base, but you won't see this in the County's article or anywhere in the mainstream media. See the Maine DEP's March 25th Report to the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources 127th Legislature, First Session.

Like the navy in Brunswick, the Air Force is not being truthful to the Loring community about the massive, toxic, and eternal contamination it has left behind. Frightening levels of PFAS contaminate the soil, air, water, and fish. Apparently, developers and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection don't think it's a big deal and appear to be eager to allow the re-development of the former air force base.

Year	Media	PFOS	PFOA
2012	Soil	220,000 ug/kg	---
2012	GW	590	7,900
2013	GW	540	7,000
2014	GW	8,300	3,300
2015	GW	24,000	---
2016	SW	1,600	---
2017	SW	2,500	110
2018	GW	22,000	11,000
2018	Storm W	7.000	---

GW is groundwater; SW is surface water.

The navy has publicized these results regarding PFAS at Brunswick since 2012. The town and the state have themselves to blame for not fully scrutinizing the bill of sale with the navy or examining their follow up "environmental" reports.

Communities worldwide continue to make the same mistake. We can see it very clearly in the plans to develop the former Loring Air Force base in Limestone.

The Portland Herald reported: "According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Brunswick spill – 1,450 gallons of aqueous film-forming foam concentrate mixed with 50,000 gallons of water – is the sixth-largest U.S. AFFF foam spill in 30 years, behind others in Florida, Alabama, Arizona (which had two larger spills) and Ohio."

Nonsense.

These carcinogenic-triggered AFFF suppression systems went off frequently pretty much everywhere the Navy operated. Remember Yokosuka! It very much matters even if it isn't in the U.S.

The Patuxent River Naval Air Station is close to my home. It's a beautiful place, where Maryland's Patuxent River majestically flows into the Chesapeake Bay. 7,435 gallons of the deadly foam concentrate escaped during 9 separate accidents from 2002 to 2015. Chemguard and Ansulite were the same 3% foams they used as Brunswick. This is what the Navy was willing to tell us in 2018. They are not as forthcoming today.

We must appreciate the power of these chemicals. A teaspoon of this concentrate can poison a city's drinking water reservoir. This is calamity. We must recognize it.

PFAS may show up as dust under your great-granchild's cradle and may be expected to affect her health for as long as she lives. Is this the legacy we want to leave?

The Downs Law Group helps to make this work possible. Their support allows us to research and write about military contamination around the world. They've helped us buy hundreds of PFAS kits and they've helped pay for flights and hotels. The firm is working to provide legal representation to individuals in the U.S. and abroad with a high likelihood of exposure to a host of contaminants.

The Downs Law Group employs attorneys accredited by the Department of Veterans Affairs to assist those who have served in obtaining VA Compensation and Pension Benefits they are rightly owed.