

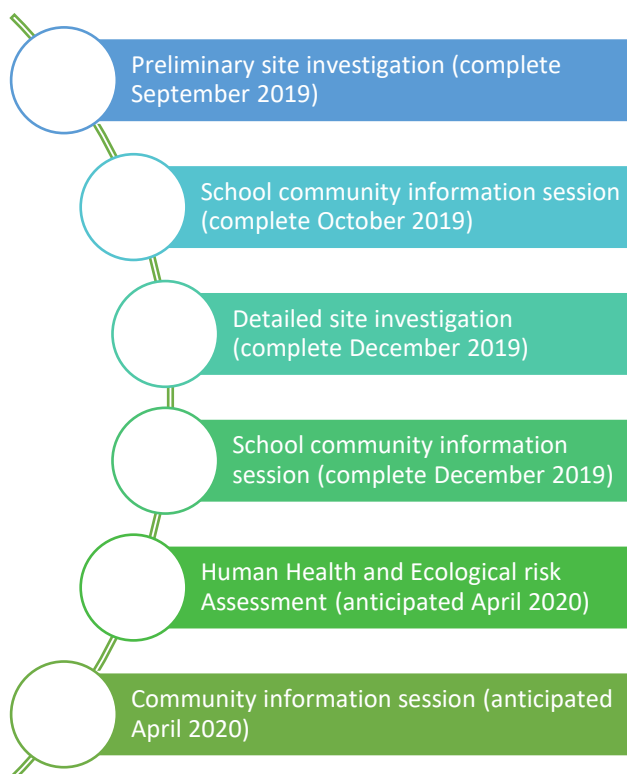


PFAS FACT SHEET TARRO INVESTIGATION PFAS Investigation and Management Activity Update

About the Investigation

In September 2019, Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW) commenced a detailed site investigation (DSI) into the nature and extent of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) at Our Lady of Lourdes (OLOL) Primary School, Tarro, as a result of the historical use of legacy firefighting foams for training.

The environmental investigation has been conducted following the process below:



Summary of the DSI Findings

The DSI found:

- PFAS detections in soil, surface water (stormwater), and groundwater samples in the investigation area.
- A number of exposure pathways are incomplete. This means that contamination is not connected to people or the environment and therefore does not pose a risk.
- Potential pathways by which PFAS might move through the environment include:

- From soil in the investigation area to groundwater or surface water (stormwater); and
- From surface water (stormwater) runoff into drains.

The DSI did not identify any elevated risk of exposure to PFAS to children, staff, and other people using OLOL Primary School from surface and near surface soils, surface water, tank water, produce, and groundwater.

A full copy of the DSI report and factsheets for the environmental investigation can be found on the FRNSW website at

<https://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/page.php?id=9322>

Next steps

Regulatory notification (complete)

FRNSW have a legislative responsibility to notify Newcastle City Council 30 days in advance of any proposed remedial works in accordance with the requirements of *State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 - Remediation of Land*.

FRNSW provided this notification in December 2019.

Turfing (January 2020)

FRNSW will be re-grassing bare areas on the playground in the investigation area in January 2020. The DSI identified that PFAS is likely to be migrating offsite via surface water (stormwater) (the primary migration pathway). Consequently, re-grassing bare areas will assist with minimising the potential offsite migration of sediment laden stormwater from the investigation area and also has a secondary benefit of minimising dust.

Further testing (January - March 2020)

The DSI identified that PFAS is likely to be migrating offsite via surface water (stormwater) (the primary migration pathway) and groundwater and therefore further investigation was recommended. This further investigation will be commenced in January 2020 and will involve:

- Additional testing of soils and surface water (stormwater) within the investigation area; and
- Testing of soils and surface water outside the investigation area (offsite).



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The results of further testing will be used to inform the planning of any necessary remedial works at OLOL Primary School to reduce potential offsite risk of exposure and the completion of the human health and ecological risk assessment.

Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment (anticipated April 2020)

While the DSI did not identify any current hazards at OLOL Primary School, a Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment (HHERA) will be undertaken to inform whether remediation or management is needed for proposed future vegetable gardens, a school kitchen, and raising chickens on site.

Using the results from the further testing undertaken above, the HHERA will also consider any potential offsite risks to people and the environment. Understanding potential exposure risks will assist in developing ways to minimise offsite exposure to PFAS if and where necessary.

Management activities (post HHERA)

On the recommendation of the NSW EPA, FRNSW have been investigating options to reduce PFAS concentrations in soils at OLOL Primary School. The primary objective of this work is to reduce the mass of PFAS present in soils in the investigation area, and therefore reduce the potential for offsite migration of PFAS via surface water (predominantly stormwater) and groundwater. A secondary objective is to consider potential future uses of the site.

Management activities implemented at OLOL Primary School will be informed by the results of further testing and the outcomes of the HHERA. Management activities could include some or a combination of:

- Excavation of soils with elevated concentrations of PFAS.
- Onsite containment or offsite disposal of excavated material.
- Construction of engineered containment cell(s) and/or placement of clean fill within excavated areas (sometimes a liner or geofabric material can be placed between the excavation and the clean fill).

- Surface reinstatement (including hardstand, grass, etc.).

PFAS Further Information

Further information about the FRNSW PFAS Investigation is available at www.fire.nsw.gov.au/pfas

Information on the PFAS Investigation Program being undertaken by the NSW EPA is available at www.epa.nsw.gov.au/Mediainformation/pfasinvestigation.htm

Information on PFAS health effects and exposure pathways can be found on the Department of Health's website at

<https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-pfas.htm>

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