

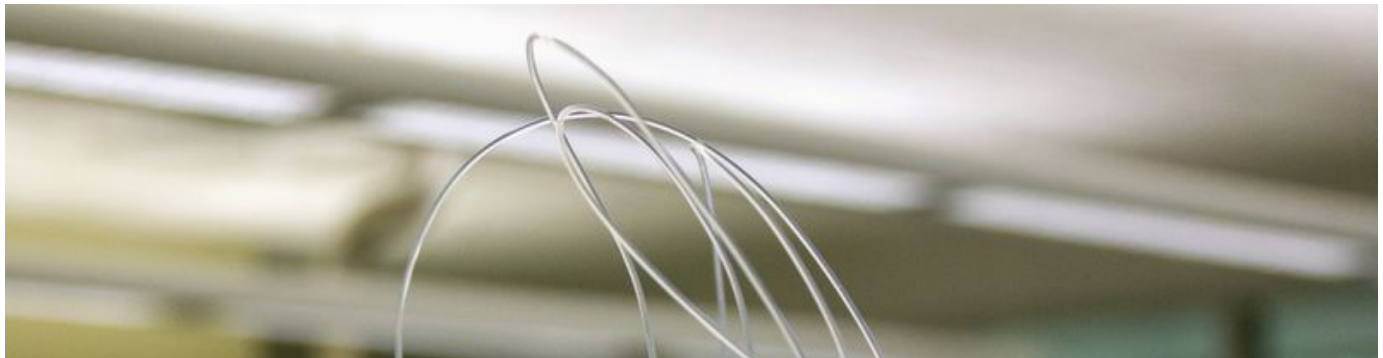
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FEEDBACK

Maryland must not let down its guard on 'forever chemicals' | READER COMMENTARY

FOR THE BALTIMORE SUN | OCT 08, 2021



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In this June 18, 2018, file photo, equipment used to test for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances substances, known collectively as PFAS, in drinking water is seen at Trident Laboratories in Holland, Michigan. (Cory Morse/The Grand Rapids Press via AP, File) (Cory Morse/AP)

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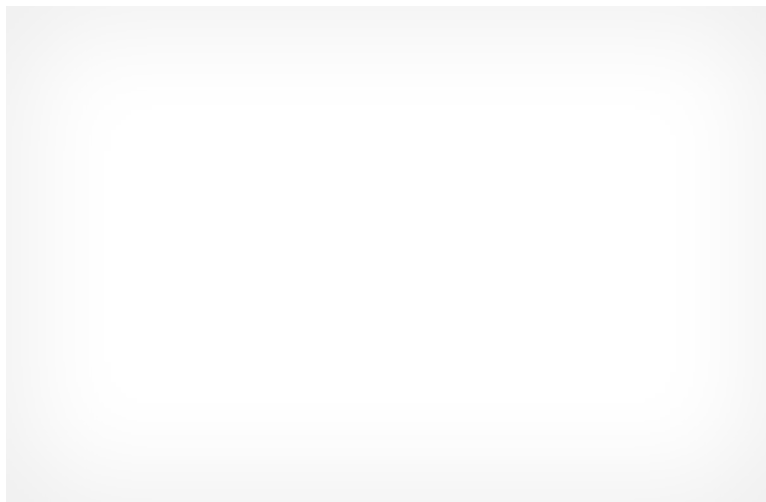
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The Baltimore Sun article, [“Maryland to resume use of pesticide after EPA testing doesn’t detect PFAS”](#) (Oct. 3), stated that Maryland will resume use of the insecticide Permethrin. Testing commissioned by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility and the Maryland Pesticide Education Network recently found PFAS, a dangerous class of chemicals known as “forever chemicals,” in Permethrin, a pesticide the Maryland Department of Agriculture had been using in their mosquito control program.

Using a new, draft methodology that tested a different set of Permethrin samples provided by MDA and the manufacturer, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reported it found no evidence of PFAS contamination. EPA’s new test does not mean that Maryland should let its guard down on the issue of PFAS in pesticides. While EPA states the agency is “working to understand how exposure to PFAS may be harmful to people and to the environment” and we appreciate their efforts to test for PFAS in pesticides, we know that PFAS remain on EPA’s approved list of inert ingredients. They are also used as active ingredients for pesticides and have been found in a number of pesticide products.

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PFAS contamination of pesticides is a widespread issue affecting an unknown, but likely very large, number of pesticide products. Because the EPA is failing to require the disclosure and testing of pesticides for PFAS, it falls to Maryland and other states to ensure that the pesticides used in the region are free from PFAS. Maryland must require pesticide manufacturers to report whether they use PFAS as active or inert ingredients, and Maryland must conduct testing of PFAS in pesticides registered for sales and use in the state.

Timothy Whitehouse and Ruth Berlin, Annapolis

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The writers are, respectively, executive director of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility and executive director of the Maryland Pesticide Education Network.

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