



Fire Department

200 North Lake Street
Cadillac, Michigan, 49601
Phone 231-775-3114 or
Fax 231-779-7375

Fire Department Foams & PFAS/PFOS

The Cadillac Fire Department feels that it is very important for a community to understand firefighting foams and how they are used by their fire department. The following guide will help residents, businesses, and visitors better understand how the Cadillac Fire Department uses firefighting foams.

WHAT IS FIREFIGHTING FOAM?

Firefighting foam is something that firefighters mix with water to help put out a fire.

WHEN DO FIREFIGHTERS USE FOAM?

The Cadillac Fire Department only uses foam for specific types of fires. Firefighters may use foam during industrial fires involving ignitable liquids, vehicle fires, ignitable liquid spills, or wildland fires. The decision to use foam is typically made by the incident commander during an actual incident.

WHY DO FIREFIGHTERS USE FOAM?

For wildland fires, foam will break the surface tension of water. Think of a drop of water on a table. It looks like a little dome. That's surface tension. Foam weakens this tension which allows water to get into more places to cool things down. Foam is also used to cover ignitable liquids with a "blanket". If the liquid is burning, the blanket will smother the fire. If the liquid is just a pool, the blanket traps the vapors and prevents them from burning.

DOES THE CADILLAC FIRE DEPARTMENT USE FOAMS CONTAINING PFAS AND/OR PFOS?

No, the Cadillac Fire Department does not use fluorinated foam. The foam that is carried is third-party verified not to contain any fluorinated agents including PFAS and PFOS.

HAS THE CADILLAC FIRE DEPARTMENT EVER CARRIED OR USED FLUORINATED FOAM?

Although rarely used, the Cadillac Fire Department did carry fluorinated foam until 2022.

WHAT CHANGED IN 2022?

Recognizing the hazards posed by PFAS/PFOS, the Cadillac Fire Department voluntarily committed to going fluorine-free. In partnership with the State of Michigan, our fluorinated foam was collected and properly disposed of by the State's designated foam reclamation contractor. We then began carrying a specialized fluorine-free foam that preserved our ability to fight certain fires without discharging any PFAS/PFOS.

WHAT IF I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

If you have questions regarding the use of firefighting foam by the Cadillac Fire Department, please contact Fire Marshal Anthony Wolff at (231)779-7364 or email him at awolff@cadillac-mi.net.