



Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Litigation

Overview

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Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are synthetic chemicals that have been manufactured and used in a variety of industries in the United States since the 1940s. There are more than 100 PFAS compounds, but the most-used PFAS in the United States are perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS). Even though the production and use of PFOA and PFOS were phased out in the United States, they are still produced internationally and can be imported into the country in consumer goods. PFAS are typically used as a water, oil, and stain repellent and can be found in a wide range of commercial and household products, including paints, water-resistant fabrics and apparel, cosmetics, dental floss, firefighting foams, nonstick cookware, polishes, waxes, stain resistant carpet, leather, textiles, paper and packaging, rubber, plastics, and cleaning products.

PFOA and PFOS do not break down easily and can accumulate in the human body and environment over time. As a result, they can be found in food and drinking water, and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), PFAS chemicals can be found in the blood of most Americans. It is alleged that exposure to PFAS can cause multiple injuries, including increased cholesterol, reproductive and developmental issues, liver and kidney damage, immune system effects, and possibly cancer. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified PFOA as possibly carcinogenic to humans, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has suggested that there is evidence that PFAS may have the potential to cause cancer.

Some of the main sources of PFAS are manufacturing and processing facilities, airports, and military installations where products containing PFAS are used or manufactured, leading to PFAS release into the air, soil, and water. Exposure to PFAS typically occurs through inhalation; ingestion of contaminated food, soil, or water; and the use of commercial products containing PFAS.

How Tucker Ellis Can Help

In addition to manufacturers and distributors of products containing PFAS, employers using it in their production or operations are also possible targets in litigation. The Tucker Ellis Mass Tort & Product Liability Group can assist clients with legal issues and help develop strategies to manage risks.

The Tucker Ellis Mass Tort & Product Liability Group represents product manufacturers in tens of thousands of cases filed in state and federal courts nationwide at both the trial and appellate levels. Our lawyers focus on the national, regional, and local defense of product liability cases involving industrial, commercial, and consumer products and toxic tort cases related to alleged exposure to naturally occurring substances such as asbestos, silica, coal mine dust, and talc, as well as welding fume, mold, and other claimed toxins.