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NEWS RELEASE

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Additional PFOS PFOA test results on Air Force Academy border show levels below EPA Established Health Advisory level

U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. – Recent well water monitoring tests on the southeast perimeter of the U.S. Air Force Academy show Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) below the Environmental Protection Agency’s Lifetime Health Advisory level of 70 parts-per-trillion (ppt.).

The Air Force Civil Engineer Center issued validated results earlier this month from eight monitoring wells installed on the Academy late last year after an initial site inspection in late 2018 and early 2019 here found PFOS/PFOA concentrations that ranged from 86 ppt. to 72,000 ppt.

“These latest test results show these chemicals have not reached the installation boundary and there has been little to no movement,” said Col. Brian Hartless, 10th Air Base Wing commander. “That said, we understand the importance of updating our neighbors to ease concerns raised and will continue to share monitoring well results as we get it.”

Approximately 40 private drinking water wells in communities south of the Academy were tested for PFOS/PFOA in September and October of 2019. Results from those tests, provided to residents, show levels well below or in the non-detectable range of the EPA’s established LHA.

Testing, which is conducted by an independent agency and validated by a third-party, can be a lengthy process. The Air Force follows a congressionally-established process known as the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act — also known as “Superfund 1980” in response to risks to human health and the environment posed by contaminated sites. CERCLA is a complex, multi-phase process that promotes accountability, community involvement and long-term protectiveness.

PFOS and PFOA are part of a family of synthetic fluorinated chemicals called per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) substances used for many years in industrial and consumer products that resist heat, stains, grease and water, as well as in commercial industry and military firefighting foam.

Firefighting foam containing PFOS and PFOA was used at the Academy from the 1970s until 1990 for firefighter training. After that time, the equipment used to dispense the foam was periodically tested until approximately 2005. The Air Force now uses foam formula that meets military requirements and the goals of the EPA’s 2010/15 PFOS Stewardship Program.

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NOTE: For more information, please contact the U.S. Air Force Academy Public Affairs Office at (719) 333-7731.