



# Annual Report FY2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Toxics Reduction Task Force

January 2024

## Introduction

To facilitate implementation of EO 515, the [Toxics Reduction Task Force](#) (TRTF) was established in 2009 with oversight and leadership by OSD and EOEEA's Office of Technical Assistance and Technology (OTA). The TRTF includes staff from OSD and OTA, the Department of Public Health (DPH), the Department of Labor Standards (DLS), the Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI), and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The TRTF remains a technical advisory group to help the EPP Program identify additional toxics in products on SWCs and explore safer and healthier options. The goals and objectives of the TRTF are to select priority focus areas for reduction in toxic substances in products or services.

During FY23, the TRTF continued to facilitate discussions and provide feedback on safer disinfection practices and products. The TRTF also continued its focus on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and participated in the Interstate Chemical Clearinghouse (IC2).

## Safer Cleaning and Disinfecting

**Quaternary Ammonium Compounds:** Members of the TRTF continued to work in FY23 to promote the reduction of quaternary ammonium compounds (QACs). TURI provides a definition of QACs as "a broad class of several hundred chemicals.... used mainly as active ingredients in antimicrobials, disinfectants, sanitizers, and surfactants. QACs also have many uses beyond disinfection, including wood preservatives, herbicides, eye drops, mouthwashes, nasal sprays, detergents and shampoos, dryer sheets and fabric softeners." The TRTF worked with OSD in FY22 to approve specifications in the OSD's [FAC118](#) contract for Environmentally Preferable Cleaning Products, Programs, Equipment and Supplies statewide contract to prohibit QACs as an ingredient in Disinfectants, Sanitizers, and Food Contact Surface Sanitizers. This includes surface and laundry disinfectants, food contact sanitizers, and non-food contact surface sanitizers, but excludes hand sanitizers, antimicrobial hand soaps, and products designed to kill pathogens on medical instruments or equipment. This contract continues to be marketed to public buyers for its ease in procuring safer products and those without QACs.

- In FY22, the TURA Science Advisory Board, administered by TURI, [recommended](#) that a category of Quaternary Ammonium Compounds (QACs) be added to the TURA Toxic or Hazardous Substance List. This category would include QACs as listed in the Environmental Protection Agency's Final Work Plans. This recommendation was made due to respiratory system irritation and inflammation including those outcomes consistent with occupational asthma and work-exacerbated asthma; corrosivity; hazard for aquatic life, environmental fate and persistence. The SAB also had additional concerns for reproductive effects and neural tube development.
- TURI has continued to publish information about QACs, including updating its QACs policy analysis, which was presented to the Advisory Committee to the Administrative Council on Toxics Use Reduction in 2023.
- The Department of Public Health began developing resources to assist municipalities and businesses with the safe use of QAC-based cleaners and disinfectants, which will include information about public purchasers' ability to purchase from the FAC118 contract.

**Manufacturers Cleaning Association event:** TURI staff attended an event hosted by the Manufacturers Cleaning Association titled [How Clean Is Clean - Automotive](#). TRTF members shared information about MCA events related to motor vehicles and safer cleaning chemicals with the OSD's Office of Vehicle Management.

## Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

The TRTF continued to discuss per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances, a family of chemicals commonly referred to as PFAS. PFAS break down very slowly and can build up in people, animals, and the environment over time, posing environmental and health concerns.<sup>1</sup> PFAS may be found in products in statewide contracts, including firefighting foam and gear, cleaning products, personal care products, clothing, furniture, textiles, carpets, rugs, and non-slip additives for industrial applications or other surfactant property processing aids.

**Conference Planning:** Members of the TRTF are assisting in organizing the Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association (NEWMOA) 2024 *Northeast Conference on The Science of PFAS: Public Health & the Environment*, to be held April 2-4, 2024.<sup>2</sup> This conference, which is expected to include over 500 attendees, is intended to update state, local, and federal officials on the newest PFAS science; enable key stakeholders to share information about PFAS; and identify knowledge gaps in PFAS science and policy.

**PFAS Free Buying Guide:** In May 2023, following work with the [Responsible Purchasing Network](#) and input from the TRTF, OSD's EPP Program published a simple [PFAS Free Buying Guide](#) to assist buyers in finding PFAS- free product on statewide contracts.

### Adding PFAS to the TURA Toxic or Hazardous Substance List:

- The TURA Program has continued to reconcile the TURA List with recent additions to the list of Toxics Release Inventory (TRI)-reportable substances, as required by the TURA statute (MGL Chapter 21I). Following the 2020 listing of 172 PFAS under EPCRA § 313 and the subsequent addition of these substances to the TURA list, EPA listed nine additional PFAS in this manner between 2021 and 2023. In FY23, the TURA Program amended its regulations to add these nine PFAS individually to the TURA List at the 100 lb. threshold, consistent with their TRI reporting threshold. Listing these PFAS individually under TURA will help manufacturers understand their use, identify opportunities for reduction or elimination, and reduce manufacturers' liability.
- OSD will continue to communicate regulatory changes in bids and to Statewide Contract vendors to encourage offering products without PFAS. OTA has developed several resources for companies to identify PFAS in their facilities and supply chains and is also available to offer companies technical assistance with identifying and eliminating potential sources of PFAS in their facilities.<sup>3</sup> TURI is also a resource for companies who wish to apply for grants to undertake research and development into PFAS alternatives for their facilities.

## IC2 Procurement Workgroup

[The Interstate Chemicals Clearinghouse \(IC2\)](#) is an association of state, local, and tribal governments that promotes a clean environment, healthy communities, and a vital economy through the development and use of safer chemicals and products. Members of the TRTF participate in the PFAS, Environmental Justice and Procurement subcommittees, bringing learning and information from the TRTF to the workgroups.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/pfas>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.newmoa.org/event/pfas-science-conference-2024/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.mass.gov/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas-tur-resources>

In the fall of 2022, Julia Wolfe, Director of Environmental Purchasing at OSD was appointed the chair to the IC2 Procurement Workgroup. IC2's Procurement Workgroup supports members' advancement of low-toxicity product procurement. Specific areas of focus include how patterns of chemical use inform environmentally preferable procurement, facilitating state and municipal cooperation to enhance the market for less-toxic products, identifying product categories that are good targets for action, sharing specification language and informing individual or joint procurement, and working with large vendors to harmonize green product claims with state requirements.

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This report underscores the ongoing dedication and collaborative efforts of the TRTF towards implementing EO 515. Throughout the year, the TRTF focused on safer disinfection practices and purchasing products free PFAS. The collaborative involvement in the Interstate Chemicals Clearinghouse (IC2) further amplifies the impact of TRTF's work, promoting the use of safer chemicals and products at a broader governmental level. The leadership roles assumed within IC2's Procurement Workgroup highlight the TRTF's commitment to driving actionable change and fostering cooperation among state and municipal entities for the procurement of less-toxic products.

As the TRTF moves forward into FY2024, it will continue to focus on addressing QACs, PFAS, and likely other emerging concerns. The TRTF has a shared commitment to safeguard public health and the environment through informed action and work to make public purchasing of safer products.