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Navy to Hold Open Houses Regarding Drinking Water Investigations

NAS JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Two public open houses are scheduled to discuss the Naval Station (NS) Mayport and Outlying Field (OLF) Whitehouse drinking water investigations.

The NS Mayport open house is Tuesday, Aug. 27 from 6-8 p.m. at Mayport Middle School, 2600 Mayport Road, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233.

The OLF Whitehouse open house is Wednesday, Aug. 28 from 5-7 p.m. at Whitehouse Elementary School, 11160 General Avenue, Jacksonville, FL 32220.

These open houses will include informational displays along with representatives from the Navy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, JEA, Atlantic Beach Public Utilities Department and Florida Department of Health. **Media are invited to attend both days an hour before each event begins for interviews.**

The Navy is currently testing private drinking water wells within identified areas in and around NS Mayport and OLF Whitehouse as part of the its commitment to ensuring local drinking water supplies are not impacted from past Navy use at either of the naval installations. These tests are at no cost to the well owners. This is part of Navy's ongoing testing of private drinking water wells that is currently taking place at and near Navy installations across the nation.

The Navy's current plan to test private drinking water wells around NS Mayport and OLF Whitehouse for per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances, aka PFAS. PFAS are man-made chemicals persistent in the environment that are not absorbed well in soil and could migrate to groundwater. PFAS have been used for many years to make products that resist heat, stains, grease and water, and have been used in a variety of products and substances, such as non-stick pans; water resistant textiles and sprays with water resistant properties.

In May 2016, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency issued lifetime health advisory (LHA) levels for two PFAS, specifically perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), at 70 parts per trillion, individually and combined if both are present. While there are no EPA regulations for these compounds, the EPA established these LHA levels to offer a margin of protection for all Americans throughout their life from potential adverse health effects resulting from exposure to PFOA and PFOS in drinking water.

The most common historical Navy use of these chemicals has been as firefighting foam (AFFF) used on Navy installations. AFFF is the most effective way to put out petroleum-based fires, such as an aircraft accident.

In June 2016, the Navy issued a policy to identify areas of potential release of these materials to the environment. As part of this policy, the Navy is testing for PFOS and PFOA in and around NAS Jacksonville.

The Navy will provide alternate drinking water (typically bottled water) for residents if their private drinking water well concentrations exceed the EPA LHA levels for PFOA and/or PFOS.

More information about the Navy's PFAS initiative and drinking water testing program may be found at:

https://www.cnic.navy.mil/regions/cnrse/installations/ns_mayport/om/environmental_support/PFC.html and
https://www.cnic.navy.mil/regions/cnrse/installations/nas_jacksonville/om/environmental_support/OLF_WHITEHOUSE_PFAS.html