

HSCA Questions and Answers

- **What is your current number of filled positions?**

225

- **What is your current number of authorized positions?**

234

- **What would you consider “full complement” for HSCA?**

234 is our current full complement based on existing funding level.

- **Can you describe the type and number of positions you would add to the HSCA program if the resources were available?**

Priority for the Bureau is to fill existing vacancies. The Bureau would additionally be interested in exploring additional staff capacity to address the number of potential PFAS contaminated sites that will need to be investigated. These staff would need to be in Central Office and in Regional Offices and would need to include Licensed Professional Geologists, a position for which the Department has had a difficult time attracting qualified candidates.

- **How much money does the HSCA program need in the upcoming budget to proceed with cleanups in a proper fashion?**

While it is difficult to estimate, it is clear that additional funds will be necessary in the Hazardous Site Cleanup Fund for existing and future cleanup of contaminated sites, especially as we discover more sites with emerging contaminants such as PFAS.

- **How many active HSCA sites are there currently in PA? (i.e., Sites where active cleanup is occurring)**

HSCA program staff are currently working on 85 state led sites. They also oversee work at 49 sites being addressed by responsible parties and are performing operation and maintenance at 27 federal Superfund sites.

- **Are there any HSCA sites where cleanup has been paused or put on hold due to lack of resources? If so, can you provide me with a list those sites?**

There is no example of a current HSCA site where work was underway and was then paused due to lack of resources.

- **How many sites have been identified or estimated to be possible HSCA sites but where cleanup has not yet begun?**

While the total number of possible HSCA sites is unknown, the Department frequently investigates potential sites. Of note, there are currently 50 Fixed Fire Training Facilities (FFTF) where investigation for PFAS contamination has not yet begun, but may pose a threat of contamination.

- **Can you describe the potential consequences of failing to cleanup a HSCA site in a timely fashion?**

A facility/property is deemed a HSCA site because it poses a potential threat to human health or the environment. Delays to investigation or remediation of those sites could lead to delays in knowledge of the extent of contamination, aid to affected residents, and elimination of potential ongoing release of contaminants into the environment.

- **Do you feel you currently have the resources available to quickly and effectively identify sites contaminated by PFAS?**

The Department is still unsure of the impacts of PFAS or other emerging contaminants. More environmental testing (ex. soil, groundwater, surface water, etc.) is necessary to effectively identify threats, which current staffing and HSCA resources do not support.

- **Can you estimate how increased identification of PFAS will increase the number of HSCA sites in the future?**

The number of sites with investigation/response from all sources of PFAS contamination has dramatically increased over the last several years. From 2021-2022, a 6% rise in the number of sites requiring tracking/response action was realized from the year before. From 2022-2023 there was an increase of 17% from the year before and from 2023-2024 there was an increase of 31% from the year before. The Department expects the number of known sites with PFAS contamination to grow as we increase our capacity to investigate the extent of contamination and regulations are promulgated to update standards and requirements.