



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Land Access Near Holloman Evaporation Pond Closed to the Public

HOLLOMAN AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. – Access to the land surrounding the Holloman Evaporation Pond (HEP) adjacent to Holloman Air Force Base will be temporarily closed effective August 14, 2025, per a decision by U.S. Air Force Col. John Ethridge, 49th Wing commander, to protect the public from potential exposure to Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS). To view the closure order and a map of the closure area, visit the Holloman Air Force Base website at: www.holloman.af.mil/News/Press-Releases/.

The land was transferred to the Department of the Air Force from the Department of the Interior via the 1995 National Defense Authorization Act to enable the construction of a new wastewater treatment facility for the base. This area receives post-processed effluent water from the wastewater treatment facility and was not procured for recreational use.

Although the NDAA requires public access to continue around the HEP, access can be changed if there are risks to public health and safety. In light of recent studies at the HEP and the 2024 EPA designation of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) as Hazardous Substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), the decision was made to temporarily close public access to mitigate the potential risks to human health posed by PFAS.

The area has been found to contain PFAS chemicals in soil and water that is at least partly linked to the past use of Aqueous Film Forming Foam products in firefighting operations and training programs on base. Holloman AFB consistently monitors the science surrounding PFAS as it continues to evolve to inform leadership decisions regarding the installation.

Holloman AFB has already taken steps to address PFAS in response to evolving science. Understanding that there was a presence of PFAS, Holloman AFB ended its hunting program in 2019 and signs prohibiting hunting were installed. In addition, all recreational activities involving the water in the HEP have also been prohibited.

Drinking water sources for Holloman AFB, Alamogordo and surrounding areas have not been affected by the PFAS at Holloman AFB and the HEP. Holloman AFB and the Alamogordo community receive their drinking water from wells located between 12 and 35 miles southeast and upgradient of the installation. These wells have been and continue to be tested and are PFAS free.