

Perfluorinated Chemicals (PFC) Statement of Intent

Policy Number: PRD/P/07

Date of Issue: July 2020

Revision Number: V2.0

Perfluorinated chemicals, or PFCs, are a broad class of chemicals used in a wide variety of applications. Certain formulations of PFC's are utilized across the outdoor industry and other industries as treatments for textiles to enhance water, oil and stain/soil repellency. These chemicals are commonly referred to as Durable Water Repellency (DWR) treatments. DWR treatments have long been known for their advanced performance in this area and are widely used by the outdoor industry in apparel, footwear, backpacks, tents, sleeping bags and other categories of technical products where getting wet is undesirable or even life-threatening. Concerns have been raised about the possible discharge of PFCs, specifically substances referred to as PFOA and PFOS, because of their persistent, bio-accumulative and toxic properties.

Kathmandu is conscious of the environmental problems surrounding PFC's. However, based on current scientific knowledge, the level of functionality and durability of certain finishes cannot yet be reached with non-fluorinated DWR chemistries. The few existing commercial alternatives cannot still be reliably applied in mass production and the products do not cause water to bead up on the outer surface, but rather penetrate into the fabric. Rain, for example, soaks inside which leads to a damp, sticky product that's uncomfortable to wear.

The move from fluorinated to non-fluorinated DWR chemistries is therefore much more challenging and one that also require an in-depth research to realize the practical application of non-fluorinated DWR finishes on textile products. Research and development efforts are also needed to make certain that non-fluorinated chemistries can provide the desired fabric attributes as well as meet our defined performance requirements.

As a responsible outdoor company, we are committed to high standards of consumer, environmental, and worker safety. And Kathmandu is always striving to identify new and novel ways to increase the sustainability of our supply chain. We are also partnering with other companies inside and outside of our industry (e.g. the chemical industry) to evaluate commercially available DWR technologies that meet our performance requirements while having a lesser impact on the planet we share. One example is our participation in the Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) Working Groups. These groups were established to share approaches and tools for the assessment and management of chemicals and their potential impacts on humans and the environment across product life cycles. Please visit <http://outdoorindustry.org/> to know more about the OIA. Our goal is to gradually transition all our products to using PFC-free DWR finishes. We envision and strive to create a world in which all consumer products are produced using Green Chemistry practices, ultimately using inherently safer chemicals and reducing or eliminating hazardous chemicals, in order to preserve human health and a clean environment. We are committed to being transparent about our progress on this journey to sustainability, please check back for updates.