

CASE STUDY: SUN MOUNTAIN SPORTS



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Company Background.

Sun Mountain Sports is a manufacturer of golf equipment based in Missoula, Montana. Since its founding in 1981, the company has introduced several innovations in golf equipment, such as golf carry bags, cart bags, push carts, golf travel bags, and golf rainwear and outerwear.



Project Background

Sun Mountain Sports has implemented numerous processes to ensure the production of high-quality golf bags and outerwear while addressing PFAS compliance. The principal production processes include design and development, fabric sourcing and production, assembly, and shipment. Most of the environmental considerations in their production involve evaluating and managing the use of chemicals, particularly PFAS in their materials. The stages in the production process that have the greatest focus on PFAS compliance are design and development. They prioritize integrating PFAS-free materials and coatings right from the design phase to ensure compliance and sustainability.

The primary concern regarding PFAS arises from the chemicals used in the treatment and coating of fabrics. PFAS are often used to provide water and stain resistance to materials, but their environmental impact necessitates careful management and alternative solutions.

Currently, Sun Mountain Sports is actively seeking guidance on federal reporting and alternatives to PFAS to ensure compliance with environmental regulations and to promote sustainability. As a company committed to sustainability, Sun Mountain Sports faces challenges in transitioning to PFAS-free materials. These challenges include ensuring that alternative materials can provide the same level of performance and durability. However, they also see this as an opportunity to innovate and lead the industry in sustainable practices.

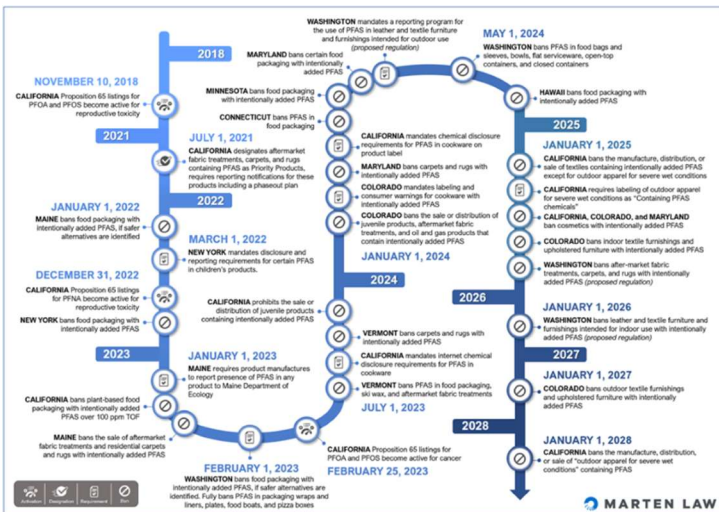


Figure 1: policies on PFAS by State

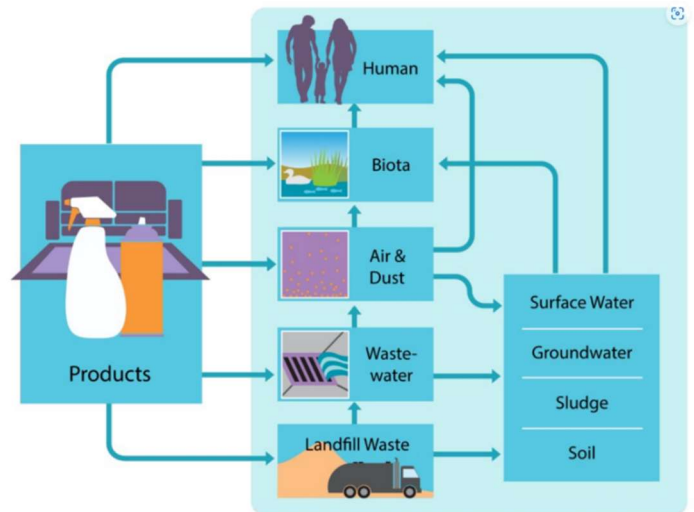


Figure 2: PFAS exposure pathway

Proposed Recommendation/Solutions

To address PFAS compliance, I have proposed the following solutions and recommendations:

R&D for PFAS-Free Coatings: Development and implementation of PFAS-free coatings that offer similar water and stain resistance as traditional PFAS-based coatings. This might take some time. However, this will be done through strengthening partnerships with the factory to ensure the availability of high-quality, PFAS-free materials. Also enhance design and development processes to incorporate PFAS-free materials from the initial stages, ensuring compliance and reducing the need for later modifications.

Customer Education: Recognize the importance of keeping customers informed about the changes and innovations we are implementing. Therefore, actively engage in customer education initiatives to ensure they understand what to expect from this shift.

Informational Campaigns: Launch campaigns to educate customers about the benefits of PFAS-free products and the environmental impact of this shift.

Transparent Communication: Provide clear and transparent information on the website about the materials used and their safety.

Customer Feedback: Create a customer feedback loop to improve products and address any concerns related to the transition to PFAS-free materials.

Federal Reporting Process: We have also initiated the federal reporting process via the Central Data Exchange (CDX) on the EPA website. This step ensures that SMS is in compliance with all federal regulations and provides transparency regarding our efforts to eliminate PFAS from product lines. The reporting process involves:

Data Submission: Regularly submitting required data on PFAS usage (as imported article) to the EPA from 2011 to 2022.

Compliance Monitoring: Creating compliance department to continuously monitor compliance with federal and state regulations and updating practices as needed.

Product Labeling: After R&D, gradually introduce product labeling using hang tags on different products to inform customers about the PFAS-free materials used. This initiative will include

Hang Tags: Attaching hang tags to our products that highlight the use of PFAS-free materials and the environmental benefits of this choice.

Educational Content: Including educational content on the hang tags to explain the significance of PFAS-free materials and our commitment to sustainability.

Brand Transparency: Enhancing brand transparency by providing detailed information about our production processes and the steps we are taking to eliminate PFAS.

Recommended P2 Actions	If Implemented				If not Implemented	
	\$		Annual Reduction		Barrier to Implementation	Plans to Implement within 5 years? (Pick Y/N)
	One-time Cost to Implement (\$)	Annual Savings from P2 Action	Air emissions (lbs)	Chemical use(ppm)		
PFAS free product	TBD	TBD	N/A	TBD	Customer Acceptability	Y
Federal Reporting	TBD	TBD	N/A	N/A	Cost	Y

