

PFAS Update- April 12, 2022 Lee Donahue Supervisor 2 Health, Education and Welfare

Last month I coordinated a community listening session with Rep. Ron Kind, State Sen. Brad Pfaff, Rep. Steve Doyle, and our 2 county supervisors to discuss PFAS water contamination and potential solutions as we identify and apply for funding. The meeting was well attended with nearly 100 people taking part.

One of the most important parts of that discussion was the emphasis on public input. Our elected and appointed leaders need to hear in the strongest terms possible, how PFAS water contamination affects our daily life. They need to see letters describing in great detail what it is like to deal with toxic water.

Just hours ago, a Waukesha County Circuit Court judge upheld a contention by the WMC that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources lacks the authority to regulate toxic PFAS chemicals and other emerging contaminants as hazardous substances under Wisconsin's Spills Law. WMC sued the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in an effort to limit the agency's ability to investigate PFAS contamination and require responsible parties to clean up contaminated sites. This can totally upend the DNR's ability to hold responsible parties accountable, it could also impact their authority to provide bottled water to PFAS contaminated communities like us.

Now is the time to make your voices and concerns known. There are forms on the table asking every resident to describe how this contamination has affected them. Every member of your household can participate. We need at least 1,000 letters from residents to say this is not acceptable, it is not safe and it is not sustainable. If you don't make your concerns known - nothing will change and the WMC will continue to challenge the DNR on every move they make trying to establish standards for our water. Describe concerns about your health, the financial impact, the effect on your children or grandchildren, the grind of dealing with the heavy water bottles or the loss of your backyard garden. Make your testimony compelling. It is the only thing which can help us turn the tide for PFAS standards and safe water.

Last week I testified before the National EPA on PFAS and water contamination. Nationwide there were 73 people scheduled to speak and 6 people shared written testimony. We must stand up for our health and safety. But I can't do it alone - I need you to be part of the solution. Together we need to speak out and demand that lawmakers stand up for safe water. We need safe water standards for groundwater and private wells.

Lastly, our Thriving Earth Exchange application was accepted and training begins on the 20th with a start date in May. If you have questions please reach out to me before board meetings or afterwards or during the week - my card and phone number are on the counter. Thanks!