

Last Feb the Natural Resources Board refused to set a standard for groundwater (private wells), raised the municipal standard from the DNR/DHS recommended 20 ppt to 70 ppt (based on the outdated 2016 EPA standard) and created a new standard for surface water which will be phased in over a number of years.

We expect the EPA to announce a “draft” maximum contaminate levels (MCL) for PFOA/OS, PFBS and HFPO (Gen-X) this Nov. 2022. MCL’s are enforceable. Currently the EPA has no standard for groundwater, which was cited by the NRB in February as a reason not to set a WI standard. Since then the new Health Advisories released by the EPA have caused the DNR to re-start the process to set standards for groundwater.

In Nov. the City of La Crosse will have to test their municipal wells for PFAS and publicly report their results.

This affects all municipalities over 49,999 residents. Smaller municipal water communities will have additional time to test and report their results.

The joint Campbell/County filter collection pilot program began last month and a under sink filters are being dropped off here at Town Hall. Margaret Larson and I met to revise the county proposed postcard and I expect to see the revisions tomorrow. Once approved a postcard will be sent to every residence in Campbell. The goal is to gain greater awareness of the environmental concerns posed by disposing spent filters in the trash, and gain greater compliance with this new disposal method.

Campbell’s partnership with the Thriving Earth Exchange continues. We have now connected with four hydrogeologists in WI. Two are part of the original team who researched the ground water flow for USGS about 20 years ago and two others are professors at UW-Madison. Our goal is to incorporate some of the fieldwork which is part of the classroom instruction with research here on the island.

This could potentially affect two fall semester classes and two spring classes. Funding for their travel and incidental expenses is expected to be covered by a small grant.

This work will help us assess groundwater flow, PFAS transport, possible sorption of organic material and other data critical to our safe long term water solution.

The USGS Tap water study is expected to be completed at the end of this month or early October. The State of WI has collected more than 25,000 gallons of AFFF with the plan to ship it to a Class C landfill out of state. I have asked Secretary Cole of the Natural Resources Board to consider dry storage as new safe destruction methods are emerging, with the possibility to destroy the PFAS with less risk of it leaching in that Class C site.

Meanwhile the DNR and Johnson/Tyco are considering drilling deeper wells in Peshtigo, despite the lack of evidence showing a direct correlation to well depth and PFAS contamination. In fact, digging deeper wells has the potential of dragging PFAS contamination deeper into the aquifer and possibly spreading and cross contaminating other aquifers.

Our collaboration with USGS UMESC and the WI geological survey continues and we hope it will help inform decisions for our community and other affected by PFAS contamination.

Thanks!