

# Gov. Evers: Signs Executive Order #40 relating to PFAS in Wisconsin

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**MADISON** – Gov. Tony Evers yesterday signed Executive Order #40 to address the issue of PFAS in Wisconsin. PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are a group of human-made chemicals used for decades in numerous products including non-stick cookware, fast food wrappers, stain-resistant sprays, and certain types of firefighting foam.

These contaminants have made their way into the environment through accidental spills of PFAS-containing materials, discharges of PFAS-containing wastewater to treatment plants, and certain types of firefighting foams.

“Everyone should have access to clean drinking water, and Wisconsinites should be able to trust the water coming out of their tap,” said Gov. Evers. “I’ve been working alongside governors and stakeholders from across the Great Lakes region to address this issue, but we have to start taking this issue more seriously here at home. I’m proud that my administration is ready to get to work to address PFAS contamination.”

Executive Order #40 directs the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to take additional steps to address PFAS contamination. The DNR is charged with coordinating with the Department of Health Services (DHS) and the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) to:

- Establish a public information website to properly inform the public on the matter of PFAS and the risk these chemicals pose to public health and Wisconsin’s natural resources.

- Collaborate with municipalities and wastewater treatment plants on screening programs to identify potential sources of PFAS into the environment.
- Expand monitoring and consideration of PFAS in the development of fish and other wildlife consumption advisories to protect human health.
- Develop regulatory standards to protect public health and the environment from PFAS contamination.
- Modify the Voluntary Party Liability Exemption law, which provides future liability exemptions after successful completion of hazardous substance cleanup, to protect Wisconsin taxpayers from uncertain and costly liability associated with PFAS.
- Assess opportunities for using natural resources damages claims under state or federal law to address compensation for PFAS impacts to natural resources.

“This Executive Order is another tangible example of the governor doubling down on his commitment to clean drinking water across Wisconsin where clean drinking water is a public health priority,” said DNR Secretary-designee Preston Cole. “This is also another large step forward in protecting the people and the land from harmful contaminants. It may be overwhelming to some, but it’s too important not to begin addressing this issue.”

Executive Order #40 also directs the DNR to create the PFAS Coordinating Council in partnership with other state agencies.

The PFAS Coordinating Council is charged with the following:

- Develop a multi-agency PFAS action plan for the State of Wisconsin.
- Develop protocols to effectively inform, educate, and engage the public about PFAS.
- Identify and prioritize likely known PFAS sources and incorporate this information into the PFAS action plan.
- Evaluate the public health risks of PFAS in addition to any impacts to Wisconsin’s natural resources, agriculture, wildlife, and fisheries.
- Develop best practices and protocols for identifying PFAS sources to ensure that the materials are managed in a way that protects natural resources and human health.
- In partnership with stakeholders, develop standard testing and treatment protocols that are both cost-efficient and effective.
- Engage academic institutions and experts to identify and collaborate on joint projects, and further identify technical resources necessary to implement a PFAS action plan.

- Explore avenues of funding for the state, local governments, and private parties to aid their effort to address PFAS.

View Executive Order #40 [here](#).