

# Sen. Agard: Legislature must take action on PFAS after latest DNR testing results

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MADISON — Today, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced the presence of elevated levels of per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) in surface water samples taken from Madison-area lakes and along the Yahara River. Senator Melissa Agard (D-Madison) and Representative Samba Baldeh (D-Madison) released the following statements regarding the DNR's announcement and the need for legislative action:

## **Senator Melissa Agard:**

“Water is life. We must protect the health and safety of all in our community. This includes taking all the steps we can to ensure that our waterways are clean and that the wildlife that depend on it are protected. The results released today by the DNR should serve as a wake-up call to the GOP as the realization of how pervasive this problem actually is. The fact that PFAS were found in samples in every lake within the Yahara Chain confirms the need for immediate and decisive action. PFAS are not only detrimental to human health, but also environmentally destructive. We must take steps to protect our health and safeguard our communities; it is imperative that everyone have access to clean water.

“Swift action to set comprehensive standards and remediation requirements in our state regarding PFAS pollution must be a priority to all Wisconsinites. Harmful toxins in one of our most fundamental and necessary resources is a great impairment on our communities and wildlife. It is past time to take action to mitigate this basic injustice. I am proud to be a lead author of the CLEAR Act (2019 SB 302) which establishes acceptable levels and standards, monitoring requirements, and

response actions of PFAS chemicals that are harmful to our health. There is no time to waste when it comes to the health and safety of our children and families and the natural world. I call on my legislative colleagues to take up this important bill immediately.

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**Representative Samba Baldeh:**

“This report of the DNR proves what we all know: water finds the path of least resistance. In this instance, water from Starkweather Creek travels into Lake Monona through secondary waterways to Lake Kegonsa. At each location it contaminates the water with varying levels of PFAS/PFOA. The upcoming report from the DNR will re-affirm it’s previous finding that the fish that live in those waters are- to varying levels- contaminated and thus, potentially dangerous to eat.

“PFAS contamination problem is a statewide concern. Communities with both Republican and Democratic legislators have been deeply affected by these chemicals. Marinette, Madison, Eau Claire and Rhinelander are only a few of the communities adversely affected. The DNR has sent us all an unambiguous message: the time to act is now. Now it’s up to the legislature to do what must be done. I will enthusiastically support the re-introduction of the CLEAR Act.”