

DNR: Collection of PFAS-containing firefighting foam waste begins

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APPLETON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) today celebrated the start of a [collection and disposal program for PFAS-containing firefighting foam waste](#) while at a collection event in Appleton.

The 2021-23 biennium budget provided \$1 million to the DNR and DATCP for administration of this program.

North Shore Environmental Construction, Inc., a Wisconsin-based company, will be collecting and disposing of at least 25,000 gallons of PFAS-containing firefighting foam waste from fire departments throughout Wisconsin.

“Removing PFAS-containing firefighting foam from our local fire houses is an important step in not only protecting firefighters from occupational exposure to PFAS, but also protecting our land and water from contamination during emergency fire operations,” said DNR Secretary Preston D. Cole.

Under state law, use of PFAS-containing firefighting foam is prohibited except during emergency firefighting operations or during testing at a facility with measures in place to prevent discharge of the foam to the environment and sewer. Many fire departments have made the switch to PFAS-free foam alternatives and have been storing PFAS-containing foam in their fire houses because of the costs associated with disposing of the foam.

“We are grateful to be one of the first departments to host a collection visit,” said Appleton Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen. “We have gathered hundreds of gallons of PFAS-containing firefighting foam for safe disposal through this program. This is one of many steps we are taking to protect our firefighters, residents and environment

from PFAS exposure.”

“We appreciate the Governor and legislature’s investment in protecting our firefighting community and the communities they serve,” said Fire Chief Michael Stanley of the Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs Association. “We are pleased with the enthusiasm and drive by our fire departments to support the quick and effective implementation of the \$1 million program and our partnership with the DNR and DATCP.”

PFAS, or perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, are a group of human-made chemicals used in numerous products, including Class B firefighting foams used to extinguish flammable liquid fires. These chemicals do not break down easily in the environment and can cause negative health impacts in humans.

Fire departments interested in participating in the foam waste collection and disposal program may contact North Shore at info@nsecinc.com or 262-255-4468.

In late 2020, the Wisconsin PFAS Action Council (WisPAC) released the [PFAS Action Plan](#), which recommended development of a PFAS-containing firefighting foam collection, disposal and replacement program.

More information about PFAS-containing firefighting foam, including updates on this collection program, is available on this [DNR website](#).