

# River Alliance of Wisconsin: PFAS found in Marshfield and Adams water wells underscores urgent need for clean water now

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Wisconsin — The communities of Marshfield and Adams shut down some drinking water wells last week after tests for PFAS contamination by the Department of Natural Resources found contamination levels would be harmful to human health. As more communities test their drinking water for contamination, it's clear that we need more resources to protect our water from PFAS pollution and Wisconsin's Spills Law should be vigorously enforced.

River Alliance of Wisconsin joined Midwest Environmental Advocates to participate in a lawsuit brought by Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce against the Department of Natural Resources over PFAS pollution that would gut Wisconsin's Spills Law.

"Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce's lawsuit is deeply misguided," said Senior Staff Attorney Bill Davis. "Wisconsin's Spills Law is the only authority our state has to protect public health by holding polluters accountable for contamination. We all learn when we are young that if you make a mess you have to clean it up. Instead, WMC wants to put that burden on the taxpayers and those who suffer from contamination."

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances are a large family of chemicals used in products from fire extinguishing foam to non-stick pans, food packaging containers, and dry-cleaning services. The chemicals cause harm to human health, are persistent in our environment, and are difficult to destroy.

“We need to take a precautionary approach to how we manufacture and use chemicals, which we haven’t done with PFAS,” said Davis. “It’s currently legal to invent a new substance and use it without determining whether it will cause human health or environmental problems. We will continue to ‘discover’ more and more problematic substances like PFAS – just as we have done with PCBs, DDT and lead – until those who create a new chemical must prove it’s safe before it’s used.”

Adams County voters will be able to express their opinion about the urgent need to protect their water by voting YES to an advisory referendum question on November ballots. The Clean Water Now question reads: “Should the State of Wisconsin establish a right to clean water to protect human health, the environment, and the diverse cultural and natural heritage of Wisconsin?” More cities will add the question this fall.

Learn more about the Clean Water Now referendums at [voteformcleanwater.com](https://www.voteformcleanwater.com).