

Dept. of Natural Resources: Multiple state agencies responding to PFAS contamination in town of Stella

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Department of Health Services (DHS) and Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) are taking steps to provide temporary safe drinking water to residents with private wells who are impacted by per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the Town of Stella in Oneida County.

DHS, in cooperation with the DNR, has issued well-specific drinking water advisories for 24 residences in the Town of Stella due to elevated levels of PFAS in their private drinking water wells.

[The DNR and DHS are participating in a meeting with town leadership and residents tonight, Jan. 19, at the Town of Stella town hall](#) to provide updates about the PFAS contamination found in some private wells and information about how those residents can access temporary safe drinking water provided by the DNR.

The state is taking the following steps to assist residents with known PFAS contamination in their private drinking water supply access safe water:

- **Providing carryout cases of bottled water:** The DNR has made carryout cases of bottled water available to the town for households with PFAS-impacted wells until temporary emergency water agreements are established.
- **Providing bottled water to homes:** The DNR has contracted with Culligan to provide bottled water delivery in five-gallon containers to the homes of residents with impacted private water supplies. Residents interested in this service are required to request it through the DNR and sign an access

agreement with the state and vendor before receiving water delivery. Residents should not contact Culligan directly if they are requesting the DNR to pay for the bottled water.

To request a temporary alternative water supply from the DNR, [please complete an agreement](#) and email it to DNRStellaPFAS@wisconsin.gov or mail it to:

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
c/o Gwen Saliaras – RR/5
P.O. Box 7923
Madison, WI 53703

When completing the agreement, residents should indicate if they need a bottom-loading dispenser. Bottom-loading dispensers are generally provided to those who are unable to lift 5-gallon jugs.

Eligible residents who are currently paying for their own bottled-water service should also complete and submit an agreement so the DNR can take over coordination and payments of their service.

Voluntary Sampling of Additional Private Water Supply Wells

The DNR and DHS are evaluating the available information – including existing private sampling results – to develop a sampling plan for additional private water supply wells.

Private well owners are responsible for testing and maintaining their well. Unlike public water systems, private well owners are not required to regularly test their wells or correct water-quality problems. It is the well owner's choice to decide which test to do and actions to take.

Background Information On PFAS

[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.

PFAS do not break down in the environment and have been discovered at concentrations of concern in groundwater, surface water and drinking water. These chemicals are known to accumulate in the human body, posing several risks to human health including certain cancers, liver damage and decreased fertility. Information about PFAS can also be found on the [DNR's PFAS webpage](#) and on the [Wisconsin DHS website](#).

More information about the current PFAS contamination in the Town of Stella can be found on the [Town of Stella website](#) and the [DNR website](#). For email updates on this situation, [subscribe](#) to the PFAS Contamination in the Town of Stella topic.