

Sen. Felzkowski: Votes for monumental investment in clean water

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Madison, WI - On Thursday, Senator Mary Felzkowski (R-Tomahawk) and her Republican colleagues on the Joint Finance Committee approved a budget motion that would invest \$125 million into clean water - specifically to treat PFAS contamination across the state.

The plan for these funds is to set them aside in the budget process, and release them as legislation specifying the uses is passed and signed into law. Future bills will address many aspects of PFAS contamination including, but not limited to, municipal PFAS grants, landowner grants, well compensation grants, a portable water treatment system pilot project, remedial action at sites contaminated by PFAS, reducing PFAS testing costs, and much more.

The 12th Senate District has seen its fair share of PFAS issues, including municipal wells in Rhineland, and some of the highest recorded contamination rates in the Town of Stella.

Senator Felzkowski stated: "Back in January, I attended a town meeting in Stella to learn more about the PFAS issues they were experiencing, and I vowed to provide funding in this budget to ensure my constituents could get assistance in resolving a problem I hope no one ever has to deal with again."

Some private wells in Stella tested positive for PFAS at levels higher than 15,000 parts per trillion. The current EPA standard is 70 parts per trillion.

Felzkowski continued, "The contamination in Stella came as a shock to the

community, and it's had a severe impact on those living in the town. These citizens, through no fault of their own, now have homes that are worth nothing, they can't drink their water, nor do they have clean water for their children, and they can't afford the few water treatment methods that are currently available."

PFAS is a family of manmade, forever chemicals that are used in everyday products like clothing, food storage, and non-stick pans. It was approved by the FDA, used by companies, and disposed of in a manner that the EPA and DNR approved of for decades.

"PFAS contamination is something that nobody in government, in business, or in society knew would be this devastating to human health. It's going to take a massive public-private partnership to clean it up. This was an easy vote for me."