

Gov. Evers: Celebrates Senate approval of bipartisan PFAS compromise after years of urging Republicans to release \$125 million to fight PFAS contamination statewide

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After months of negotiations with Republican lawmakers, Gov. Evers today celebrated the Wisconsin State Senate taking up two bipartisan bills to finally release \$125 million in stalled investments to help clean up Wisconsin's water

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today celebrated the Wisconsin State Senate passing two bipartisan bills that are the result of months of negotiations between the Evers Administration and Republican lawmakers and the years of advocacy by the governor. The Senate later today is poised to approve Assembly Bill (AB) 130 and AB 131 with key changes, which together facilitate the release of the \$125 million in stalled PFAS investments that have languished unspent in Madison for years despite the governor's persistent demands for the funds to be released. In his [2026 legislative agenda](#), Gov. Evers cited PFAS legislation as an opportunity for bipartisan work and compromise, urging lawmakers to make releasing \$125 million to fight PFAS statewide “another bipartisan win for the people of Wisconsin” after 2025 yielded historic bipartisan accomplishments despite divided government. The governor intends to sign AB 130 and AB 131 in the coming weeks.

Months of negotiations between the Evers Administration and Republican lawmakers finally resulted in a series of changes that have been compiled into two

substitute amendments that represent a good-faith effort toward reaching a final, bipartisan deal on PFAS. More information on Gov. Evers' effort to reach a bipartisan deal on PFAS with Republican lawmakers is available in this previous release issued by Gov. Evers [here](#).

"I've always believed that every Wisconsinite should have access to clean drinking water that's free of harmful pollutants, which is why I've spent seven years working to clean up our water and get contaminants out of our water supplies for good, including PFAS, which has been a top priority for my administration from the get-go. Today is the culmination of years of work by my administration and marks a historic win for the people of Wisconsin and the health and safety of our kids, families, and communities. It's a great day for Wisconsin," said Gov. Evers.

"While I wish it wouldn't have taken nearly as long for the Legislature to join me in this important work, I'm thrilled that these bills will soon be on the way to my desk so that we can get these critical and long-overdue investments out the door to the folks and families who need them. Whether it's kids in the classroom, families at home, or our farmers and agricultural industries, folks should be able to trust that the water coming from their tap is clean and safe. I'm incredibly proud we were able to work across the aisle to get this done—and get it done right," Gov. Evers continued. "I also want to thank the good folks at the Department of Natural Resources, Republican lawmakers for their willingness to work together, and the many stakeholders and advocates who've rallied around this issue for years. I also especially want to extend my gratitude to the many Wisconsinites in communities impacted by PFAS who've spent years urging lawmakers to act and never gave up, including folks on French Island to Stella to Marinette and so many communities in between—today is a victory, first and foremost, for them."

AB 130 and AB 131, together, secure protections for innocent landowners, invest \$80 million of the \$125 million in the PFAS Trust Fund to support local communities, invest \$35 million of the \$125 million in the PFAS Trust Fund for an expanded Well Compensation Grant Program, provides funding for emergency bottled water for private well owners in situations in which PFAS contamination in drinking water is discovered, and creates new opportunities for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to support communities in PFAS mitigation, among other important provisions.

"The DNR negotiated in good faith with the bill authors throughout the legislative

process and supports the collaborative, bipartisan result. This was a critical step to ensuring Wisconsinites have access to safe drinking water and will help reduce exposure to PFAS to protect human health,” said DNR Secretary Karen Hyun. “Some of the programs authorized in these bills will create brand new opportunities for the DNR to support Wisconsin’s residents and communities, and the DNR will work expeditiously to develop and staff these critical programs. The DNR is committed to moving quickly to ensure these programs and assistance are available to those who need it most.”

This comes as, earlier this month, Gov. Evers [approved](#) new changes to bring the state’s current drinking water standards in line with [federal limits for PFAS](#), reducing the state’s threshold for PFAS contamination from its current, outdated level of 70 parts per trillion (ppt) to a new enforceable standard of 4.0 part per trillion (ppt) for certain contaminants—an effort that will significantly improve drinking water standards and quality for Wisconsinites.

OVERVIEW OF PROVISIONS WITHIN AB 130 & 131

Protection for Innocent Landowners

The bills build upon the governor’s budget provisions protecting innocent landowners by amending the Spills Law to ensure farmers, landowners, certain business owners, and fire departments are not held responsible for PFAS contamination they did not cause.

Resources for Communities

The bills allocate about \$80 million from the PFAS Trust Fund to a community grant program to assist local governments in combating and remediating PFAS contamination in their communities. Eligible activities include:

- Sampling private wells;
- Installing PFAS treatment at a public water system;
- Creating a new public water system or connecting private well owners to a public water system in areas where there is PFAS contamination in the private water supply;
- Sampling drinking water for PFAS in schools and child care centers;
- Sampling for PFAS in high-capacity irrigation wells and soil on farmland;
- Sampling for PFAS in biosolids and wastewater before it is spread on farmland;

- Sampling for PFAS in groundwater and private water wells that are part of a monitoring plan at public solid waste landfills;
- Investigating PFAS contamination to determine the most appropriate remedy; and
- Conducting immediate and interim actions to mitigate, treat, or dispose of PFAS contamination in air, land, waters, or other natural resources in the state.

Also included is a dedicated grant program of \$5.25 million to assist public airports and certain businesses with tackling PFAS contamination. Eligible remedial actions for this grant program include actions taken to control or minimize the discharge of PFAS from the site, as well as restoration activities to ensure the site no longer poses a threat to human health.

The bills provide \$35 million for an expanded Well Compensation Grant Program to assist homeowners and businesses with private wells to ensure their drinking water is safe from PFAS. As Gov. Evers has proposed numerous times in the past, this proposal expands the eligibility limits for this program to allow more Wisconsinites to utilize the program and also allows non-community water supplies, schools, and childcare facilities to receive funding.

The bills also allocate funding for the provision of emergency bottled water for private well owners when PFAS contamination in drinking water is discovered, additional research activities related to PFAS, and support for the State Lab of Hygiene and other labs to assist in evaluating samples for PFAS.

Staffing resources at the DNR

The bills also creates 10 new positions and appropriates \$1.3 million from the general fund to existing DNR appropriations for the following purposes:

- \$118,900 for general program operations relating to conservation, the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway, and management of the state's fishery resources and the trapper education program;
- \$929,900 for the management and protection of the state's water resources and for environmental quality and environmental management purposes; and
- \$261,600 for communications, customer services, aids administration, watershed management, and environmental analysis and sustainability.

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND ON GOV. EVERS' AND THE EVERS ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS TO FIGHT PFAS AND LEAD CONTAMINATION STATEWIDE

Gov. Evers declared 2019 the Year of Clean Drinking Water, and for the past seven years, has prioritized efforts to address PFAS contamination, proposing numerous comprehensive plans to protect Wisconsinites from PFAS in drinking, ground, and surface water. The Evers Administration enacted the first statewide standards for PFAS in surface and drinking water and has proposed groundwater standards multiple times despite Republican obstruction. Gov. Evers also secured a historic \$125 million investment of state funding in the 2023-25 Biennial Budget to assist homeowners and communities in addressing PFAS contamination, but, as noted above, Republicans in the Legislature have blocked the DNR from accessing this funding for over two years.

Following multiple attempts to call on the Legislature to release this funding without delay, last session, Gov. Evers vetoed Senate Bill 312, a Republican bill claiming to release the PFAS Trust Fund and address contamination but in fact did not release one dollar from the PFAS Trust Fund and also included harmful "poison pill" provisions that would have removed authority the DNR currently possesses to hold PFAS polluters accountable and require those polluters to clean up their own spills, despite the governor communicating to bill authors that the bill would be vetoed unless they removed this "poison pill" provision.

Months later, in his 2025-27 Executive Budget, Gov. Evers once again recommended a comprehensive plan to address PFAS contamination across surface, drinking, and groundwater. Among other provisions, the governor's proposal recommended allowing the full balance of the PFAS Trust Fund to be utilized by the DNR, with special attention made to protect innocent landowners, as well as the adoption of major policies in the CLEAR Act, including exempting DNR rulemaking relating to setting enforceable PFAS standards from the REINS Act. Unfortunately, Republican lawmakers removed the majority of the governor's proposals to address PFAS contamination from the final budget. More on Gov. Evers 2025-27 Executive Budget recommendations to address PFAS statewide is available [here](#).

Despite these obstructions, the Evers Administration has continuously sought bipartisan compromise to release funding from the PFAS Trust Fund as well as protect truly innocent landowners. In addition to the efforts noted above, additional resources outlining Gov. Evers and the Evers Administration's

efforts to urge Republican leaders to release the \$125 million PFAS Trust fund approved in the 2023-25 Biennial Budget are available below:

- March 2, 2026: [Gov. Evers Builds Upon Efforts to Clean Up Wisconsinites' Water, Approves New Rule Changes Strengthening PFAS Drinking Water Standards](#)
- Jan. 21, 2026: [NEW: Gov. Evers Optimistic About Reaching Final Deal with Republican Lawmakers to Secure Release of \\$125 Million in Long-Awaited PFAS Investments](#)
- Feb. 28, 2025: [Gov. Evers Announces Comprehensive Plan to Ensure Clean Water for Kids and Families in 2025 Year of the Kid](#)
- Feb. 4, 2025: [Gov. Evers Announces New Plans to Combat PFAS, Protect Kids and Families from Harmful Contaminants, and Expand Access to Clean, Safe Drinking Water](#)
- May 6, 2024: [Gov. Evers Again Calls Republican Lawmakers into Special Meeting to Urge Immediate Release of \\$140 Million to Fight PFAS Statewide, Respond to Hospital Closures in Western Wisconsin](#)
- April 16, 2024: [Republican Lawmakers No-Show at Special Meeting to Release Statewide PFAS Funding, Stabilize Healthcare Access in Western Wisconsin](#)
- April 9, 2024: [Gov. Evers Calls Joint Finance Committee into Special Meeting to Release Critical Funds to Fight PFAS Statewide, Stabilize Healthcare Access in Western Wisconsin](#)
- March 18, 2024: [ICYMI: Gov. Evers Visits Local Water Treatment Centers, Continues to Urge Republicans to Release \\$125 Million to Fight PFAS Statewide](#)
- March 14, 2024: [Gov. Evers Again Urges Legislative Republicans to Release \\$140 Million to Fight PFAS Statewide, Stabilize Healthcare Access in Western Wisconsin](#)
- March 11, 2024: [Gov. Evers Slams Republicans for Continued Delays Releasing Critical Funds to Fight PFAS Statewide, Stabilize Healthcare Industry in Western Wisconsin](#)
- Feb. 27, 2024: [Gov. Evers Urges Lawmakers to Support Compromise to Release \\$125 Million to Fight PFAS Contaminants Statewide](#)
- Jan. 23, 2024: [Gov. Evers Again Urges Wisconsin Republicans to Release \\$125 Million in Already-Approved Funds to Fight PFAS Statewide](#)
- Dec. 19, 2023: [Gov. Evers Urges Legislature to Release \\$125 Million to Address PFAS, Act to Protect Wisconsin's Groundwater](#)



An online version of this release is available [here](#).