



Office of the Mayor

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City of Madison Tackles Contaminants in East Side Water

City of Madison officials are working with the Department of Natural Resources, Dane County, and the Wisconsin Air National Guard to mitigate the contamination of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). These are man-made chemicals that have been produced since the 1950's and have been used for a variety of industrial applications including coatings for textiles and firefighting foams.

PFAS-containing foams have been used for firefighter training and fire emergencies in the Madison area, near Truax Field, and at the Dane County Regional Airport since the late 1970s or early 1980s. Testing conducted in 2017 by the City of Madison Water Utility indicated that two municipal wells had small amounts of PFAS contamination. The low levels detected in the wells are not considered a potential threat to human health; however, the City has been in communication with the Wisconsin Air National Guard regarding remediation of the training sites.

The City of Madison has additionally included funding in the 2019 budget to supplement a Department of Natural Resources study of fish in surface water in the area, specifically at the mouth of the Starkweather Creek into Lake Monona. There are currently fish consumption advisories, unrelated to PFAS contamination, in effect for fish caught in the area, but if there is further contamination, those [advisories](#) could be upgraded and highlighted.

Madison Water Utility is continuing to test the water in Wells 15 (near East Towne Mall) and 16 (near Memorial High School) to determine if levels are increasing. [You can find test results here.](#)

Attached is a letter that Mayor Soglin sent to Captain Matthew Shaw with the Wisconsin Air National Guard. In it, he requests additional groundwater, surface water and sediment testing and a request for immediate environmental restoration at Truax Field.

To continue to ensure the safety and well-being of residents and the environment, City staff have met with Alders from the area and are meeting regularly to create a City work plan to continue monitoring the situation, as well as identify if and when there is a need for additional action.