

## **AGENDA**

### **CITIZENS' (Wood County) GROUNDWATER GROUP**

Mon., September 25th, 2023; 2:00 pm

In-Person – Riverblock Auditorium, Rm #206

VIRTUAL Mtg.; WebEx connect information below

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Public Comment - - (Rules May Apply)
- 3) Approve Minutes of Aug. 21st meeting-“WCCGG Next Step”
- 4) Correspondence/Updates/Handouts/Reports on Meetings Attended
  - Work of Juneau Co. Land & Water committee
  - Work of CSGCC (Central Sands Groundwater Counties Collaborative)
  - Wood Co. Health Dept. PFAS Initiative (planned)
- 5) “WCCGG Next Steps”
  - Possible group name change (“Citizen’s WATER Group”)
  - Creation of “Events Subcommittee”
  - Speakers Approach – “Speaking-to-the-Choir” vs Public Outreach
- 6) Plans for Off-site, Large Group Presentation
  - Target Audience (expected attendees)
  - Location of event
  - When
  - Moderator
  - Speakers/Panel #'s
  - Message/Title of Presentation
  - Outcome-who do we want to influence
  - Suggested action by attendees
  - Q & A length & procedure
  - Follow-up (mailing, another meeting)
  - Other
- 7) Upcoming local & regional events to be aware of
- 8) Future Speakers – Suggestions welcome
- 9) Agenda Items for next meeting (next agenda comes out one week prior)
- 10) Next Meeting – October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- 11) Adjourn

\*See PFAS News below

#### **Join by phone**

1-408-418-9388 United State Toll

Meeting number (access code): 2484 961 0708

#### **Join by WebEx App or Web**

<https://woodcountywi.webex.com/woodcountywi/j.php?MTID=m63101d8803be9e45b8a4f7306fa48ea>

Meeting number (access code): 2484 961 0708

Meeting password: CGG2022

# PFAS News

## Unsettling PFAS Settlement

**St. Paul** — A multi-district legal settlement requires Minnesota-based 3M Corporation to pay at least \$10 billion toward decontaminating municipal water supplies across the country. The total cost of the settlement is estimated at \$10.5 to \$12.5 billion over 13 years.

3M pioneered the use of PFAS chemicals, which are useful for repelling water and grease but also cause liver damage, cancer and other health problems.

PFAS don't break down easily and are now found throughout our environment, even in the blood of U.S. newborns. One study found that health costs resulting from PFAS exposure may top \$60 billion.

## New PFAS Fish Consumption Warning

**Hastings, Minn.** — The Minnesota Department of Health recommends that children and some women avoid eating fish taken from Lake Rebecca, a popular oxbow lake in Hastings, and from Pool 2, the stretch of river from the Hastings dam upriver to the Twin Cities.

The guideline suggests that children under age 15 should not eat any fish from this part of the river. Neither should people who are pregnant or could become pregnant or people who are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. State officials believe that PFAS levels found in fish in these parts of the river are unsafe for these populations.

For those over 15 who are not planning on becoming pregnant, the Minnesota Department of Public Health still doesn't think it's safe to eat carp from Pool 2. It suggests only one serving per month of crappie, largemouth bass or sunfish from Lake Rebecca or one serving per month of crappie, flathead catfish, freshwater drum, sunfish or white bass from Pool 2.

PFAS are implicated in causing cancer and other health problems. They were pioneered by Minnesota's 3M

Corporation, which has its headquarters and other facilities near Pool 2. PFAS are now found in water bodies, humans and animals around the world.

The Minnesota Reformer reported August 1 that the new guidelines follow a June report from 3M that identified 16 types of PFAS in fish at these locations.

## French Island Claims

**Town of Campbell, Wis.** — French Island residents have served the city of La Crosse with more than \$23 million in claims, asking for compensation for decreased property values and other damage due to contamination from PFAS.

The city has until early October to either pay or deny the claims. If it denies the claims, French Island residents may sue the city.

The residents allege that their well water is contaminated with PFAs from decades of using firefighting foam at the La Crosse airport. Claimants argue

... private wells on French Island have PFAS levels as high as 3,000 parts per trillion, thousands of times higher than standards.

that the city knew of the risk to private wells for years before informing citizens and that private wells on French Island have PFAS levels as high as 3,000 parts per trillion, thousands of times higher than standards. Many private well users have been supplied with bottled water since 2021.

The same year, La Crosse sued multiple manufacturers, including 3M, over their production of PFAS-filled firefighting foam. 3M recently settled for more than \$10 billion with municipal water sources, but attorneys general in states like Wisconsin are urging the courts to reject the deal, as it doesn't cover situations like that at French Island, where private wells were contaminated.

## Low Water

**Lakeland, Minn.** — Water is no longer taken for granted on the Upper Mississippi. On July 21 Minnesota ordered public-water suppliers in the St. Croix Watershed to restrict water usage as a regional drought widened. The St. Croix is a tributary of the Mississippi,

It's not a new story. In 2022 the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources concluded that rapidly growing Minneapolis suburb Blaine overdrew its well-water allowance, so it shut down 47 homeowners' wells.

Drought, groundwater drawdowns and pollution raise pressing questions about water supplies.

A U.S. Geological Survey study released in July found that 45 percent of U.S. drinking-water samples are tainted with PFAS, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has found that these "forever chemicals" are more dangerous than previously thought.

Minnesota banned PFAS in most products this year under a law named for Amara Strande of Maplewood, Minn., home of PFAS manufacturer 3M Co. Strande died April 14 at age 20 after testifying five times for a ban on PFAS, on which she blamed her rare form of liver cancer.

Yet demand for water keeps mounting in water-rich Minnesota. Twin Cities suburb Elko New Market agreed June 8 to allow Niagara Bottling LLC of Diamond Bar, Calif., to draw 310 million gallons annually from the city's regional aquifer. State approval is required, with a decision expected this autumn.

Globally, humans have extracted so much groundwater that it has measurably altered the tilt of the planet, the American Geophysical Union reported in its June 15 publication *Geophysical Research Letters*. Redistribution of 2,150 gigatons of water between 1993 and 2010, mostly in the American West and in India, shifted the Earth's tilt 31.5 inches. ■