



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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PFAS detected in City of Waite Park Wells

Waite Park, MN. – The City of Waite Park recently conducted voluntary testing of all municipal drinking water supply wells for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) to determine if these emerging contaminants are present in our water system based on the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) proposed drinking water standard. This sampling was conducted as a voluntary, proactive measure to ensure continued safe drinking water and to better understand what emerging contaminants may need to be addressed. As a result, PFAS was detected in all 3 city wells. Currently, the City of Waite Park is not in violation of any drinking water regulations, but the level of PFAS in each well is slightly over the levels that exceed the Health Risk Index (HRI) of 1 as determined by MDH.

PFAS are a large group of human-made chemicals that break down very slowly over time. They are considered an emerging contaminant that may contribute to negative health impacts with long-term, high levels of exposure. A water system or well is not the source of the contaminant. PFAS enters the water system through ground water. Several PFAS chemicals have been used for decades in many industrial applications and consumer products such as carpeting, waterproof clothing, upholstery, food paper wrappings, personal care products, fire-fighting foams, and metal plating. There are thousands of PFAS chemicals and more evolving over time, which makes it challenging to study and assess the potential human health and environmental risks. This can also be the reasons why the EPA or MDH have not regulated them at this point.

The City of Waite Park remains committed to providing our residents and businesses with safe drinking water. We have been proactive with working with MDH and will be setting up a pilot study to determine the best process on how to remove PFAS within our water treatment system. In addition, the City is also working with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency on determining whether or not a source of the contamination can be verified.

It will also be important for our residents and businesses to know we all play a role in reducing the impacts of PFAS in our community. We all need to do our part in reducing PFAS consumption and usage. We encourage everyone to be part of the solution by becoming educated on the environmental impacts and health risks associated with PFAS. The City will continue to do its part in keeping our residents and businesses updated on the impacts of PFAS on our water system as we work towards a water treatment solution which will eliminate or reduce the levels of PFAS in our drinking water.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

MDH Dashboard Link Showing Drinking Water Test Results:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/pfasmapp.html>

MDH Link to More Information on PFAS:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/hazardous/topics/pfcs.html#safelevels>

MDH Links to Reducing Exposure to PFAS:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/hazardous/docs/pfas/pfasreducingexp.pdf>

https://pfas-exchange.org/wp-content/uploads/PFAS-Tip-Sheet_Reduce-exposure-web.pdf

MDH Link to PFAS and Home Treatment of Water:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/hazardous/topics/pfashometreat.html>