

# PFAS Contamination In Town Of Stella

# Community Information Session

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Department of Health Services (DHS)

Aug. 15, 2023



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT  
*of* HEALTH SERVICES

# PFAS Contamination In Town Of Stella

- Department of Natural Resources

- **James Yach**, NR Secretary's Director
- **Mark Pauli**, Northern Region Drinking Water and Groundwater Supervisor
- **Marty Nessman**, Private Water Section Manager
- **Michelle BalkLudwig**, Northern Region Wastewater Supervisor
- **Patrick Gorski, PhD**, Water Quality Research Scientist

- Department of Health Services

- **Roy Irving**, Hazard Assessment Section Manager

# Private Well Sampling Update

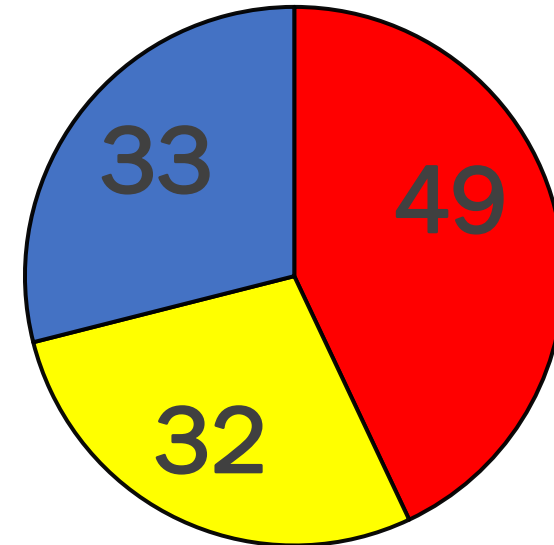
114 private wells have been sampled for PFAS

- DNR Sampling: 98 wells within 2.5 miles of Town of Stella Town Hall
- Private Sampling: 16 wells; 10 outside of DNR's 2.5-mile sampling area

## Breakdown of results:

- PFAS detected above DHS recommended health guidelines: **49 private wells**
  - 47 Health Advisory Letters issued
  - Eligible for in-home bottled water funded by the DNR
- PFAS detected below DHS recommended health guidelines: **32 private wells**
- No detection for PFAS: **33 private wells**

PFAS Sampling Results in Private Wells



■ Above DHS guidelines ■ Below DHS guidelines ■ No Detection

# Drinking Water

- Exposure to high levels of some PFAS can negatively impact health
- DHS continues to review private well sample results and has issued well-specific drinking water advisories for those with PFAS levels above our recommended groundwater standards



# Interrupting PFAS

**exposure reduces PFAS levels in  
our body.**



# **If the PFAS levels in your well water are above our recommended groundwater standards:**

- Use an alternative water source for drinking, cooking or other consumptive purposes
- You can use water for showering, bathing and washing hands as PFAS do not easily enter the body through skin



# Resources for Impacted Wells

- ARPA Well Compensation
- New Well Recommendation
- Treatment Options

# ARPA Well Compensation Eligibility

- Wisconsin income does not exceed \$100,000
- Advisory letter from DNR/DHS
- Awards up to \$16,000
- Pays for new well or treatment




# ARPA Well Compensation

- Complete Application – Form 8700-392
- Enclose:
  - Bid for new well or treatment
  - W-9 Form
  - WI Tax Return or one of the affidavits provided on website
  - Copy of well construction report for current well (if available)
  - PFAS laboratory results and advisory letter from DNR/DHS

# ARPA Well Compensation


- Use the correct form:

**Section I. Claimant Information**

Applying to replace a private well. 

Business owner applying to replace a non-community public well.

Owner Applying to Replace a Private Well.						
Claimant Last Name	First	MI	Well Address (if different from mailing address)	County		
Mailing Address			City	State	ZIP Code	
City	State	ZIP Code	Landowner Last Name (if not claimant)	First	MI	
Claimant Phone Number (include area code)	County		Landowner Phone Number (include area code)			
Claimant Email Address			Landowner Signature (if not claimant)		Date signed	

 Note: A letter of consent from the landowner may be attached instead of a signature on this form.

Claimant must answer 'Yes' to the two following questions to be eligible:

- Yes, I am the landowner OR landowner's spouse, heir, assignee/legal representative, or renter.
- Yes, my family income did not exceed \$100,000 in the prior calendar year.

# ARPA Well Compensation

- Filling out next sections:

## Section II. Description of Problem

The well is contaminated with the following: (check all that apply)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bacteria         | <input type="checkbox"/> Nitrate              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arsenic          | <input type="checkbox"/> Metals               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Petroleum        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chemicals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) |   |

## Section III. Proof of Contamination

Proof of contamination Based On: (check all that apply)

- |   |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sample Results (Attach copies of Lab results for 2 water samples collected at least 2 weeks apart, but not more than 2 years.) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DNR/DHS Advisory (Attach a copy of advisory)  |

# ARPA Well Compensation

- Select alternative and add justification:

## Section V. Evaluation of Proposed Action(s)

Note: Please choose Yes or No for each alternative listed below.

Alternatives Considered	Feasible
1. Construction of a new well	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
2. Reconstruction of existing well	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No

Claimant Name	Claim Number
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## ARPA Well Compensation Grant Application Claim

Form 8700-392 (R 04/23)

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3. Connection to an existing system	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Public <input type="radio"/> Private
4. Alternate water supply (e.g., bottled, trucked)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	
** Treatment (complete only if all others are not feasible)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	

Chosen Alternative:

Justification (Please provide a brief explanation of why you selected the option above. Information about condition, age, etc. of existing well is helpful)

High PFAS concentrations, replacing shallow well using DNR recommendation.

# ARPA Well Compensation

- Each application is reviewed on case-by-case basis
- Review takes 4-6 weeks
  - We will contact you if we need more information
- Work can't start until application is approved
  - Grant award letter
- Wells with concentrations of 200 ppt or more should consider a new well rather than treatment

# New Well Recommendation

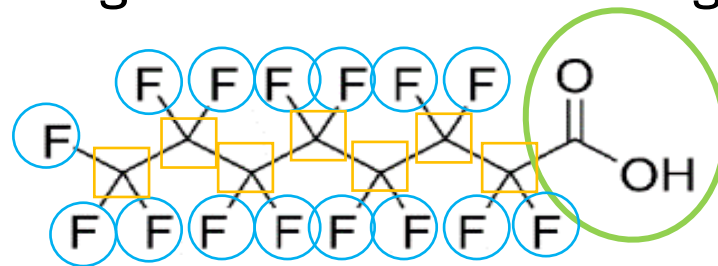
- Cement grouted casing at least 20 feet into bedrock
- Developed based on sample results and known construction
- Will be adjusted as new wells are drilled

# Treatment

- Most effective when PFAS concentrations are less than 200 ppt
- Point of use treatment
  - Reverse osmosis and granular activated carbon are most effective

# PFOA/PFOS Water Quality Standards Rule (WY-23-19)

- Adopted PFOA and PFOS standards for all waters of the state
  - Based on critical exposure routes for each pollutant
  - Interpretation of Narrative Standard prohibiting toxics at levels of public health significance
- Established Implementation Plan
- Provide methods for calculating limits and determining when limits are necessary





# Wastewater and Industrial Solids Update

- Interim strategy outlines management strategies for PFAS-containing industrial solids or biosolids
- Ahlstrom paper mill sludge sampled on July 25, 2023
  - Results forthcoming
- DNR will be requiring solids sampling at permit application



# Surface Water Sampling Update

- Brief overview of water quality criteria
  - Criteria describe conditions in a waterbody that protect the ways that people and animals use that waterbody
  - Criteria can be numbers...
    - “Substance X must be below 10 parts per million”
  - ...or narrative statements
    - “Waterbody shall be free from objectionable tastes and odors”
- Numeric criteria protect against harmful health effects from exposure over the course of a lifetime

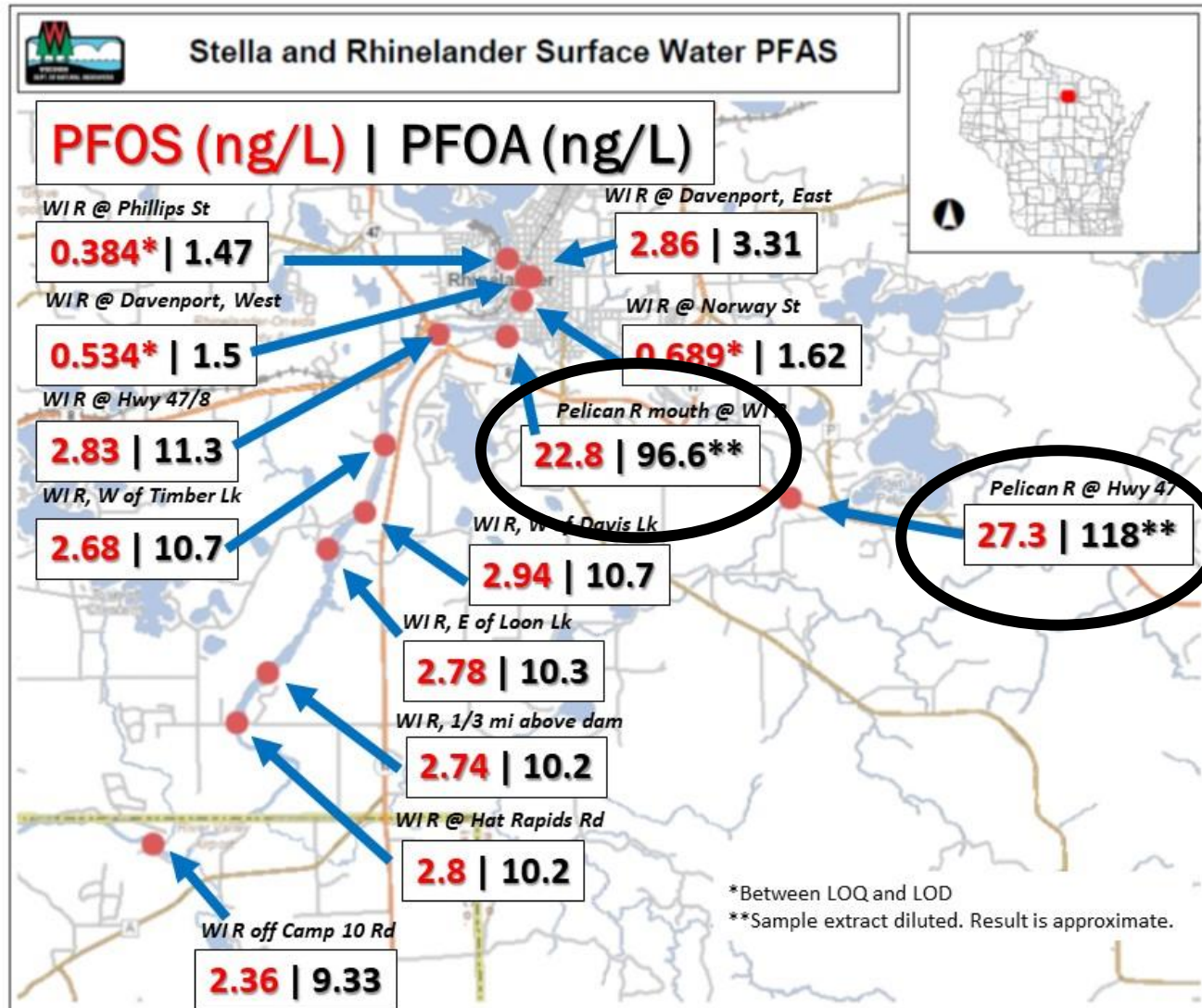
# Surface Water Sampling Update

- PFOA and PFOS surface water criteria
  - Incorporate information about toxicity of each compound, how people might be exposed to them, and the way they behave in the environment
- PFOA: People are mostly exposed through swallowing water, either from drinking it on purpose or accidentally swallowing lake water during recreation
- PFOS: People are mostly exposed to PFOS through eating freshwater fish
- Current WI surface water standards for waterbodies not used as drinking water supplies:
  - **PFOA = 95 ng/L (ppt) and PFOS = 8.0 ng/L (ppt)**

# Surface Water Sampling Update

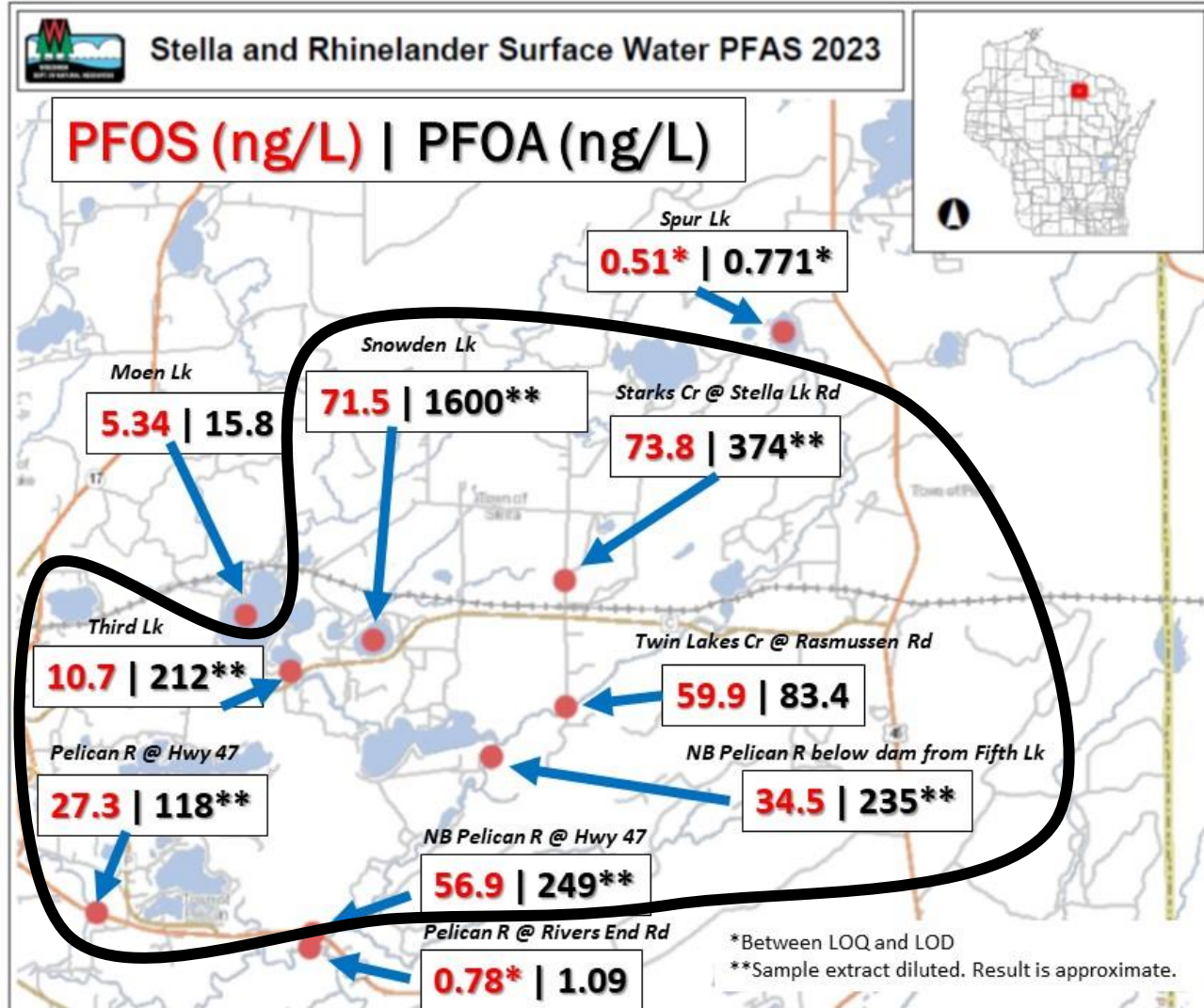
- General Sampling Approach:
  - Groundwater is connected to Surface Water
  - Trying to define extent of area based on groundwater results
  - Choose sites surrounding or near potential sources
  - Not able to sample every waterbody
    - Can get information on several waterbodies, if connected
  - Start downstream and move upstream if sources noticed
- Sampling occurred June and July 2023
  - Areas: Rhinelander and WI River, Town of Stella, Snowden Lake

# Rhineland and WI River Sampling



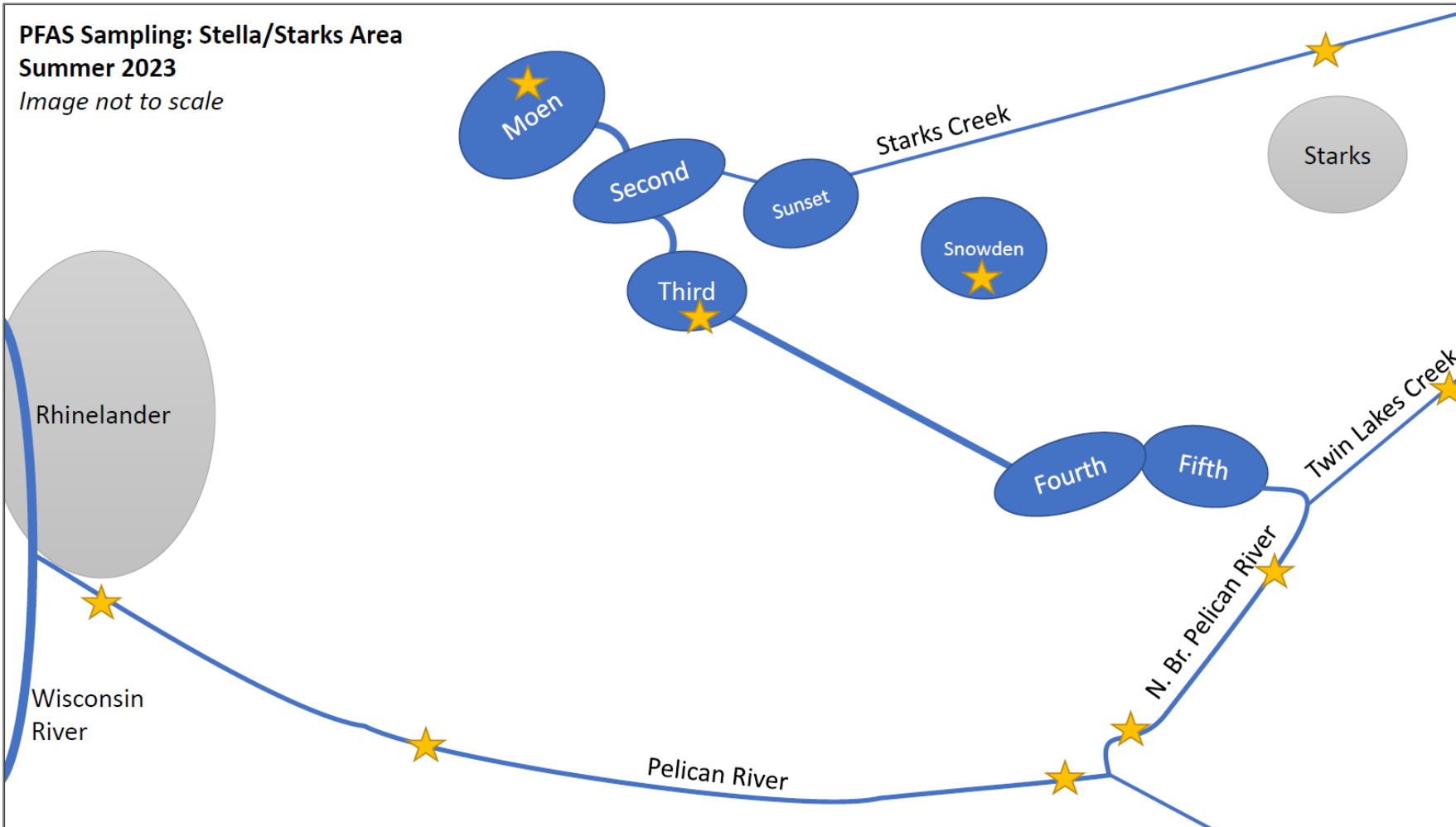
- Pelican River had higher concentrations than the Wisconsin River
- Wisconsin River concentrations higher downstream of the mouth the Pelican River
- Sites within the Wisconsin River were similar to each other and below the surface water PFAS standards
- Camp 10 site downstream of Crescent Creek

# Town of Stella Area Sampling



- Spur Lake, Moen Lake and Pelican River @ Rivers End Rd were below surface water standards
- Other sites above standards
- Snowden Lake was highest and sampled @ Public Access (nearshore)

# Surface Water Sampling Update



- Concentrations make sense from general surface water flow paths
- Moen does not get direct flow from Starks Creek
- Snowden Lake main source of water is groundwater seepage and not part of the chain
- Snowden resampled on July 27, 2023 at multiple sites to confirm results

# Surface Water Sampling: Next Steps

- Follow-up sampling plan is being developed
- More surface water sites will be sampled in 2023 and 2024 to better define area.
  - Exact sites are currently being discussed
- Water Quality works directly with Fisheries to share results and strategize site selections
- Fish have already been collected from Fifth Lake and are at the lab being processed and analyzed
- More fish from more sites will be collected in 2024 and 2023  
TBD



# You may swallow different amounts of lake water while doing different recreational activities

These activities can result in different levels of PFAS exposure:

Catch & release fishing  
Boating

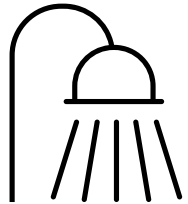
Canoeing  
Kayaking  
Paddleboarding

Swimming  
Water skiing  
Tubing  
Fishing for food

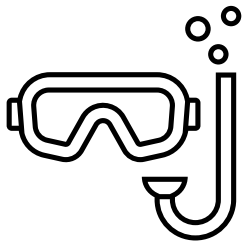
Less Exposure

More Exposure

# You can take steps to reduce your PFAS exposure



Rinse off after swimming and avoid contact with foam



Avoid swallowing lake water – watching children closely as they tend to swallow more



Follow Wisconsin's fish consumption guidelines

# Wisconsin's Fish Consumption Guidelines

STATEWIDE SAFE-EATING GUIDELINES FOR MOST OF WISCONSIN'S INLAND (NON-GREAT LAKES) WATERS		
Species	Women under 50 and children under 15	Women over age 50 and men
Bluegill, crappies, yellow perch, sunfish, rock bass, bullheads, inland trout	1 serving per week	Unrestricted
<b>AND</b>		
Walleye, pike, bass, catfish, all other species not listed here	1 serving per month	1 serving per week
<b>AND</b>		
Musky	Do not eat	1 serving per month

Statewide guidelines

# Wisconsin's Fish Consumption Guidelines

Site-specific advisories: Moen Lake Chain

Established: mercury

PFAS: to be determined

- Nearby Wisconsin River advisories are typically 1 meal per week for panfish (bluegill, crappies, perch, pumpkinseed, rock bass, etc.)

GUIDELINES FOR WOMEN UNDER 50 & CHILDREN UNDER 15 (MERCURY)		
	Up to 1 meal per month	Do not eat
GUIDELINES FOR WOMEN OVER 50 & MEN (MERCURY)		
Waterbody	Up to 1 meal per week	Up to 1 meal per month
Moen's Lake Chain (includes Moen's, Second, Third, Fourth, & Fifth Lakes)		Walleye over 19"

# What's Next?

# Website and E-mail Updates

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/PFAS/Stella.html>

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar with social media icons and the DNR logo. The main heading is "PFAS CONTAMINATION IN THE TOWN OF STELLA". Below the heading is a paragraph of text. To the left are buttons for "SUBSCRIBE", "SUBMIT", "FIND", and "SEARCH". To the right is a "Related Links" section with a list of links. At the bottom left are expandable sections for "Public Meetings" and "Drinking Water Sampling".

**PFAS CONTAMINATION IN THE TOWN OF STELLA**

PFAS contamination has been detected in Town of Stella, Oneida County in private drinking water and groundwater. In addition to the information on this website, the Town of Stella has a [website \[exit DNR\]](#) dedicated to providing information to the public.

**SUBSCRIBE** to updates about PFAS contamination in the Town of Stella.

**SUBMIT** a question, comment or concern about PFAS in the Town of CStella.

**FIND** a certified lab that can test drinking water for PFAS.

**SEARCH** a database for sites with reported PFAS contamination.

**Public Meetings** +

**Drinking Water Sampling** +

**Related Links**

- Water Quality Initiatives
- PFAS Contamination in the City of Madison and Dane County
- PFAS Contamination in the Marinette and Peshtigo Area
- PFAS Contamination in the Town of Campbell and French Island
- Environmental and Health Impacts of PFAS
- PFAS Investigation and Cleanup
- PFAS Lab Analysis in Wisconsin
- Firefighting Foam

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov>

The banner features the "OPEN THE OUTDOORS" logo on the left and a red envelope icon with the text "Subscribe for Email Updates" on the right.

## Email Updates

To sign up for updates or to access your subscriber preferences, please enter your contact information below.

Subscription Type

Email Address \*

PFAS Contamination in the Town of Stella

# Upcoming Opportunities

## HEARINGS AND MEETINGS CALENDAR

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodations, including the provision of informational material in an alternative format, will be provided for qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. Please call the contact person listed for the meeting or hearing with specific information on your request before the date of the scheduled hearing.

Note: Actual end times may be earlier or later than scheduled. Hearing dates and times are subject to change. Please verify meeting dates and times prior to attendance.

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# CONNECT WITH US

DNR

[DNRStellaPFAS@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRStellaPFAS@wisconsin.gov)

DHS

[DHSEnvHealth@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:DHSEnvHealth@dhs.wisconsin.gov)



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"WILD WISCONSIN:  
OFF THE RECORD"