

PFAS in Woodbury activity timeline

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) were made and used by several companies around the world in household and industrial products such as stain repellents, lubricants, fire retardant and suppressants, and more. The 3M Company made PFAS at its Cottage Grove facility from the late 1940s until 2002.

PFAS wastes were disposed of at several sites in Washington County including locations in Lake Elmo, Oakdale and in southern Woodbury near Woodbury Drive (3M Woodbury site). The source of the PFAS in our groundwater has been identified as these disposal sites and the manufacturing facility in Cottage Grove.

Below is a general timeline of PFAS-related activities in Woodbury since 2005:

2005 The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) begins testing Woodbury's wells for PFAS after low levels of PFAS were detected in private wells in western Lake Elmo. Monitoring of Woodbury groundwater production wells continues today.

2007 PFAS detected at low levels in Woodbury wells. MDH establishes a health risk level for some specific PFAS. Woodbury's wells test below the health risk levels.

The State of Minnesota and 3M reach a settlement agreement that provides the state \$40 million for temporary water treatment projects relating to PFAS in the east metro.

2009-2011 The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and 3M complete additional remediation activities at the disposal sites. Long-term site groundwater management and remediation continues to limit remaining contamination to the sites.

2012 Due to advancements in detection technology, trace levels of other PFAS are found in Woodbury wells. However, the concentrations detected remain below the health risk limits established by MDH.

2016 The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reduced its drinking water protective guidance level for some PFAS to 70 parts per trillion. EPA studies indicate exposure to certain PFAS at high levels may result in an increased risk of adverse health effects.

MDH announced it was reviewing studies and methods used by the EPA to determine whether its own health risk levels need to be lowered and, if so, what the values should be.

2017 May - The MDH completed its review and updated its protective guidance level for some PFAS. The new risk levels, based on daily consumption over a lifetime, were reduced further from the EPA 70 parts per trillion guidance. MDH scientists updated the values to better reflect new state-level analysis of the potential for mothers to pass along the chemicals to fetuses and nursing infants.

MDH issues health risk advisories on five of city's 19 wells with PFAS levels above water quality standards and guidelines. The city makes operational changes, significantly reducing the use of these five wells.

2018 February – The State of Minnesota and 3M reach a settlement agreement and the state receives a grant from 3M for \$850 million. After legal fees, approximately \$700 million remains for assisting east metro communities in cleaning up its water supply.

The State of Minnesota begins to study long-term water treatment options in the east metro that will be funded through the \$700 million settlement grant. A preliminary report is expected to be shared with communities in the first quarter of 2020.

2019 April – The MDH lowers health-based advisory value for PFOS again from 27 parts per trillion, set two years ago, to 15 parts per trillion and sets a guidance value for PFHxS.

October – The MDH issues a health risk advisory on a sixth Woodbury well. All six Woodbury wells with health risk advisories are taken out of service.

December – City of Woodbury receives approval to begin design on a temporary treatment facility to treat three of the current six wells out of service for PFAS impacts.

2020 January – The Woodbury City Council declares a local emergency to expedite the construction of a temporary water treatment facility to treat three of the six wells with health advisories. Project funding is coming from the 2007 Consent Decree agreement between the State of Minnesota and 3M. City begins work with its consultants to design the treatment facility.

February - The MDH issues a health risk advisory on a seventh Woodbury well and it is taken out of service.

More information:

- woodburymn.gov/pfas
- woodburymn.gov/pfasfaqs

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