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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **CITY OF WAUKESHA SETTLES SECOND STATE LAWSUIT OVER DRINKING WATER VIOLATIONS**

**WAUKESHA** – The City of Waukesha has agreed to pay \$55,000 to settle the most recent state claims brought against the City under Wisconsin's drinking water laws.

Wisconsin is required to administer a safe drinking water program no less stringent than federal safe drinking water standards. As part of that program, Wisconsin law sets forth contaminant levels and other requirements for public water systems, including a maximum contaminant level for radionuclides (radium). Pursuant to an agreement negotiated with USEPA, community water systems were required to comply with that level by December 2006.

According to the complaint, the City of Waukesha water system failed to achieve compliance with the contaminant level for radium by 2006. The City has implemented a number of measures including drilling new wells and constructing treatment systems, but has not yet brought its drinking water system into complete compliance with state radium standards.

As part of the settlement, the City will follow a strict monitoring and reporting plan approved by the Department of Natural Resources, and will operate its water system so that the water served to every point in the distribution meets the numeric radium standards. The City must come into complete compliance with state and federal drinking water radium standards by 2018. This deadline is accelerated if the City fails to operate its system in accordance with the interim standards set forth in the stipulation.

In addition, the City of Waukesha will pay \$55,000 in forfeitures, costs and fees. In 1995, the City of Waukesha paid \$20,000 for violations that preceded the EPA agreement providing for the 2006 deadline.

Long-term exposure to elevated levels of radium in drinking water poses a higher risk of bone cancer for the people exposed. "Wisconsin law protects the public by setting radium standards for drinking water," Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen said. "The Department of Justice will continue to work with the DNR to ensure that water systems provide water that meets those standards."

Assistant Attorney General JoAnne F. Kloppenburg prosecuted the case. Waukesha County Circuit Court Judge Michael O. Bohren approved the settlement.

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