

**Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resources Board Agenda Item**

Item 6.A.

SUBJECT:

Introduction and Status Update on Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) Contamination in Wisconsin

FOR: September 2019 Board meeting**PRESENTER'S NAME AND TITLE:** Jim Zellmer, EM Division - Deputy Administrator**INFORMATION ITEM:**

The NRB Chairman requested an informational presentation on PFAS

SUMMARY:

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of human-made chemicals that includes PFOA, PFOS, GenX, and several thousand other chemicals that contaminants of emerging interest around the world. PFAS have been manufactured and used in a variety of industries around the globe, including in the United States since the 1940s. PFAS are found in firefighting foams and a wide range of consumer products that people use daily such as Teflon cookware, pizza boxes and stain repellants. PFAS are very persistent in the environment and in the human body – meaning they don't break down and they can accumulate over time. Most people and animals have been exposed to PFAS and low levels in their blood. There is evidence that exposure to PFAS can lead to adverse human health effects.

There has been very little PFAS sampling data that has been collected for environmental (e.g., air, land and water), human health or wildlife (e.g. waterfowl and fish) impact in Wisconsin. This year, DNR is currently collecting surface water and fish tissue samples from five locations near probable PFAS sources to begin developing a surface water occurrence database on these contaminants. The plan is to continue to expand this sampling effort as funding is made available.

DNR's remediation and redevelopment program is currently overseeing active investigations of PFAS groundwater contamination at approximately 21 sites in 10 counties. There are currently very few state or federal regulatory standards for the cleanup and safe management of PFAS-contaminated materials. Under the WI Spills Law, persons responsible for the contamination are required to investigate and work with DNR and state department of health services (DHS) to develop site-specific clean-up standards at these locations, if no standard otherwise exists.

On developing standards, DNR sent a request to DHS in 2018 for a recommendation on groundwater enforcement standards for PFOA and PFOS, two of the most widely studied PFAS. In early 2019, DNR sent a request to DHS to provide recommendations for 34 additional PFAS that have been detected or have a reasonable probability of being detected in Wisconsin groundwater. We recently received DHS' recommendation for PFOA and PFOS groundwater standards and plan to begin rulemaking to revise the groundwater quality standards to include these substances. We also plan to use this DHS recommendation to begin rulemaking for surface water quality and drinking water standards.

Approved by	Signature	Date
Darsi Foss, Administrator, Environmental Management Division	<i>Darsi Foss</i>	8-15-19
<i>for</i> Preston D. Cole, Secretary	<i>Beth Bier</i>	8-26-19

cc: Board Liaison – AD/8

Jim Zellmer, Deputy Administrator, EM Division

by Beth Bier