

Governor Announces 2022 PFAS Action Plan Progress

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<http://newiprgressive.com/images/stories/S5/clean-water-rural-s448.jpg>



We're making investments and taking critical steps to take action on PFAS across Wisconsin.

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today announced the Wisconsin PFAS Action Council released its 2022 PFAS Action Plan Progress Report. As part of the Year of Clean Drinking Water, Gov. Evers [created the Council](#) in 2019, which is comprised of a group of nearly 20 state agencies and the University of Wisconsin System, charging the Council with developing a state action plan to respond to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in Wisconsin. 2022 PFAS Action Plan Progress Report provides updates on PFAS action under the Evers Administration to date as well as recommendations for continued, future action.



"I am proud of the coordinated work across our state agencies and with local communities and stakeholders through the PFAS Action Council as we continue to lead with science to understand where and how PFAS is impacting families and communities across our state," said

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Gov. Evers. "Ensuring folks have clean, safe water to drink is as much of a public health issue as it is an environmental issue and an economic issue. From a volunteer fire department working to remove PFAS foam from its storage to a local water utility applying for a grant to upgrade its system to ensure local residents have safe water flowing from their tap, we're making investments and taking critical steps to take action on PFAS across Wisconsin."

The Wisconsin PFAS Action Plan includes 25 recommended action items categorized into eight themes: standard setting, sampling, pollution prevention, education and communication, research and knowledge, phase-out, future investments and historic discharges. The 2022 report outlines steps taken and progress made by the Evers Administration to address PFAS contamination since December 2020, when the Wisconsin PFAS Action Plan was released, including:

Collecting PFAS-containing Firefighting Foam Waste At the recommendation of the PFAS Action Plan, Gov. Evers included a \$1 million investment in his [2021-23 biennial budget](#)

to support the collection and disposal of [firefighting foam that contains PFAS](#)

. With the help of this funding, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), in coordination with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP), will begin collecting more than 25,000 gallons of PFAS-containing firefighting foam waste from across more than 60 counties in Wisconsin this year.

Sampling Municipal Water Systems



The PFAS Action Plan also recommended conducting drinking water testing, monitoring, and public notice if PFAS exceed health advisory levels. So far, the Evers Administration has

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assisted in sampling more than 125 municipal drinking water systems, 100 wastewater treatment plants, and hundreds of private drinking water wells. Earlier this year, Gov. Evers also [announced](#) the state would use more than \$600,000 in funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to support communities sampling municipal water supplies to test for PFAS and help ensure water is clean and safe for residents. In addition to Wisconsin's own PFAS Action Plan, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released its own PFAS Strategic Roadmap in October 2021. While EPA and other federal agencies implement the Roadmap over the next few years, the Council will coordinate and support communities and stakeholders through new federal regulations and guidance.

Establishing the Office of Environmental Justice

In celebration of Earth Day [earlier this year](#), Gov. Evers signed [Executive Order #161](#), creating the Office of Environmental Justice at the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA). The Office of Environmental Justice will work in collaboration with the Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy to facilitate collaboration across state agencies to provide strategies to promote environmentally just policies and prevent disparate outcomes in communities across the state while engaging with farmers and rural communities, communities of color, Tribal Nations, state and local partners, and low-income populations, among other key stakeholders.

Initiating Legal Action Against Major Chemical Companies

Gov. Evers and Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul just weeks ago

[announced a lawsuit](#) against three Wisconsin manufacturers and 15 other defendants whose conduct led to PFAS contamination, which was the result of recommendations in the Council's PFAS Action Plan released in 2020.

PFAS are a group of human-made chemicals used for decades in numerous products, including non-stick cookware, fast food wrappers, stain-resistant sprays and certain types of firefighting foam. These contaminants have made their way into the environment, and humans and animals can develop negative health impacts when exposed to them. PFAS chemicals resist degradation in the environment and accumulate in the body. Epidemiologic studies have shown that potential adverse human health effects from exposure to some PFAS include increased serum cholesterol, immune dysregulation, pregnancy-induced hypertension, liver damage, and kidney and testicular cancers. Exposure to certain types of PFAS is also associated with low birthweight in humans, suppressed immune system response, dyslipidemia, impaired kidney function, and delayed onset of menstruation.

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To read the PFAS Action Plan, the Progress Report released today, or learn more about the Council, please visit the [DNR's Wisconsin PFAS Action Council \(WisPAC\) webpage](#).