



Environmental and Public Health Groups Urge EPA to Move Forward with Proposal to Limit PFAS in Public Drinking Water

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Madison, WI—Today, Midwest Environmental Advocates (MEA) announced that nearly a dozen Wisconsin environmental and public health groups joined MEA in submitting a [comment letter](#) to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) urging the agency to move forward with the process of establishing the first nationwide standards for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in public drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

The EPA has proposed a limit of four parts per trillion (ppt) for PFOA and PFOS, two of the most widely studied PFAS compounds. The agency has also proposed to regulate PFNA, PFHxS, PFBS, and GenX as a mixture, using a hazard index calculation to determine if the combined levels of these substances pose a public health risk. The proposed limits would apply only to public water systems and not to private wells.

MEA and a coalition of organizations submitted a comment letter highlighting PFAS pollution in Wisconsin's community water systems. They support the [proposed regulation](#) as a meaningful action that would provide significant public health benefits in Wisconsin and nationwide.

"The proposed standards are science-based, protective, feasible, cost-justified, and absolutely crucial to reducing the health risks associated with PFAS exposure," said **MEA attorney Jorge Roman-Romero**. "Limiting PFAS in our drinking water will protect public health as intended by the Safe Drinking Water Act."

Two-thirds of Wisconsinites—roughly four million people—rely on municipal drinking water. PFAS pollution affects an increasing number of communities throughout the state. To date, the PFAS compounds subject to EPA's proposal have been detected in 25 community water systems at levels that are higher than the proposed limits. Collectively, those 25 water systems serve more than half a million people.

"Clean drinking water that is free of health risks is a basic right for all—or should be—and we feel that the agency's proposed regulations are a meaningful step toward that outcome," said **Terry Kilian, a spokesperson for Citizens for a Clean Wausau.**

EPA's proposed limits for PFOA and PFOS are significantly more protective than Wisconsin's drinking water standards. When EPA's standards are finalized, Wisconsin will have two years to revise the state drinking water standard to comply with federal requirements unless a two-year extension is granted by the EPA.

Because PFAS are highly toxic, Wisconsin utilities that detect PFAS levels above EPA's proposed limits should develop plans to remove PFAS from drinking water as soon as possible, rather than wait years for state regulations to be revised.

Under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, billions of dollars in federal funds are available to help defray the compliance costs of the EPA's proposal. In Wisconsin, another \$13 million in funding per year is available—through 2026—via the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program for Emerging Contaminants. In addition, the Joint Finance Committee of the Wisconsin Legislature recently voted to create a \$125 million fund to help municipalities address PFAS contamination.

Midwest Environmental Advocates is a nonprofit law center that combines the power of law with the resolve of communities facing environmental injustice to secure and protect the rights of all people to healthy water, land, and air. Learn more at www.midwestadvocates.org or www.facebook.com/midwestadvocates.

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