

News Release – Madison Water Utility

For Immediate Release

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Madison looks to state for guidance on PFAS

March 4, 2019 – Madison Water Utility will temporarily rely on other well facilities to serve the [Well 15 area](#) on the city's east side as it waits for a recommended PFAS standard from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS). The DHS is expected to recommend a PFAS groundwater standard to the Department of Natural Resources sometime this spring.

The utility does expect Well 15 to meet the DHS' recommended standard and plans to bring the well back online this summer. According to [Public Health Madison Dane County](#), the levels of PFAS detected at Well 15 are **not** considered a potential threat to health, and its water is safe to drink.

Madison Water Utility's decision comes after staff discussions with Madison Mayor Paul Soglin. Temporarily using other wells may give families who live in the Well 15 service area some peace of mind as state health officials examine the issue. PFAS chemicals are currently unregulated in Wisconsin. Most people in the area actually get a blend of water from Well 15 and one or more other wells. PFAS detections at Well 15 are far below the EPA's Lifetime Health Advisory Level.

Taking Well 15 offline until summer means Madison Water Utility will have to **suspend all PFAS testing at the well**. The utility will also monitor two nearby reservoirs to make sure they can stay filled under current demand without Well 15 in operation. It is possible that Well 8 in Olbrich Park will be brought on standby this spring, ready to help meet demand if needed. Madison Water Utility generally only uses Well 8 during high-demand months because its water contains high levels of naturally-occurring iron and manganese.

PFAS (or per- and poly-fluoroalkyls) are widely-used chemicals found in food packaging, non-stick cookware, stain-resistant fabrics, and firefighting foams. City officials believe the chemicals are likely coming from nearby Truax Air Field, where PFAS were found in shallow groundwater and have been used in firefighting foams.