

Gary D. Olsen, MPA
Administrator
golsen@rothschildwi.com

Timothy D. Vergara, P.E.
Administrator of Public Works
tvergara@rothschildwi.com

Evan Garski
Zoning Administrator
egarski@rothschildwi.com



Elizabeth Felkner, WCMC
Clerk
efelkner@rothschildwi.com

Melanie Wiskow
Treasurer/Utility Clerk
mwiskow@rothschildwi.com

Stacey S. Stepan
Administrative Assistant
sstepan@rothschildwi.com

March 16, 2022

RE: Rothschild Water Utility Voluntary PFAS Re-Testing Results, Future Action Plan, and Drinking Water Advisory

Dear Water Customer:

The Rothschild Water Utility completed a second *voluntary* round of sampling for Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) in our drinking water system on February 23, 2022. The actions taken by the Village after its first round of samples indicated a 12% drop in PFAS in the distribution to the system. However, based on demand, the Village may place Well #4 online. Should this occur, water chemistry will likely revert toward the original results.

Village of Rothschild Water Utility PFAS Voluntary Sampling				
Sample ID	PFAS Result		Hazard Index (HI): Original	Hazard Index (HI): Re-Test #1
	Original Test	Re-Test #1		
Entry Point EP200	22.4	19.8	1.2	1.1

This notice is to inform you of the results and the current and next steps that the utility will be taking. PFAS compounds in the Rothschild's Water Utility supplied drinking water are below all individual recommended health advisory levels but are present at levels above Wisconsin Department of Health Services' (DHS) hazard index guidance. The hazard index is a way of assessing the potential health impacts associated with mixtures of PFAS. The test results can be reviewed at this link on the Village's webpage.

https://www.rothschildwi.com/visitors/public_works_utilities_garbage/pfas_information.php

- ❖ **The DHS recommends** that people limit their intake of PFAS compounds when the HI is >1.0 and can reduce exposure to PFAS by limiting their consumption of the utility's drinking water. You may use your tap water for doing laundry, washing dishes, washing produce brushing teeth, and filling your swimming pool. These activities are not expected to be a significant exposure source.

People can consider alternative water sources such as:

- ✓ Purified or filtered bottled water.
- ✓ Other sources of water that have been tested for PFAS and do not have levels above recommended standards.
- ✓ Filtered water from a pitcher, sink, or whole-house filter system with a certified filter technology. A granular activated carbon (GAC) filter that meets certification by ANSI/NSF Standard 53 or a reverse osmosis (RO) filter with an included GAC component can filter out PFAS. These numbers will be printed on the filter and/or packaging. More information about filtering out PFAS from drinking water is available here: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p03012.pdf>
- ✓ Boiling water does not remove PFAS.

What are per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)? Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a large group of human-made chemicals that are resistant to heat, water, and oil. These chemicals have been used for decades in many industrial applications and consumer products such as carpeting, waterproof clothing, upholstery, food paper wrappings, personal care products, fire-fighting foams, and metal plating. PFAS have been found at low levels both in the environment and in blood samples of the general U.S. population.

Potential Health Risks of PFAS. Long term exposure to high levels of the PFAS may increase cholesterol levels, reduce antibody levels, and reduce a woman's fertility. While some PFAS can affect health in a similar way, they are not equally harmful. For this reason, DHS uses a hazard index approach to assess the potential for health impacts from mixtures of PFAS. When the hazard index is too high, DHS recommends people take action to reduce their risk of health effects. [DHS's webpage on PFAS \(https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/chemical/pfas.htm\)](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/chemical/pfas.htm) has more information about the hazard index, including a video describing what it is and how it is used to protect public health.

How does PFAS get into drinking water? PFAS can get into drinking water when products containing them are used or spilled onto the ground or into lakes and rivers as well as from manufacturing and disposal. PFAS move easily through the ground, getting into groundwater that is used for some water supplies or for private drinking water wells. When spilled into lakes or rivers used as sources of drinking water, they can get into drinking water supplies. PFAS in the air can also end up in rivers and lakes used for drinking water.

How people can be exposed to PFAS and why are they harmful? The main way that people are exposed to PFAS is by drinking water or eating food containing them. PFAS chemicals do not easily absorb into the skin so contact with water that contains PFAS poses a very low health risk. A large number of studies in people have examined possible relationships between levels of PFAS in blood and harmful health effects in people. However, most of these studies analyzed only a small number of chemicals, and not all PFAS have the same health effects. This research suggests that high levels of certain PFAS may increase cholesterol levels, decrease how well the body responds to vaccines, and reduce fertility in women. Some other studies have indicated that high levels of certain PFAS may increase the risk of thyroid disease, increase the risk of serious conditions like high blood pressure or pre-eclampsia in pregnant women, and lower infant birth weights.

What is being done to correct the problem? The Rothschild Water Utility is **not** in violation of any drinking water standards or regulations and has taken actions proactively to protect the health of its customers. The utility is currently working on short- and long-term solutions for a permanent fix to this situation. The Rothschild Water Utility is committed to providing our consumers with quality drinking water. As your water supplier, we will continue to work closely with the DNR to maintain the quality of your water. **If you have questions about this notice, please contact the Village of Rothschild at 715-359-3660.**

Specific health information regarding PFAS compounds with health advisory recommendations in WI can be found at the Village's website www.rothschildwi.com and at the following:

➤ Dial 211 and follow the prompts for information regarding PFAS.

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/water/gws-cycle10.htm>

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/water/gws-cycle11.htm>

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/chemical/pfas.htm>

[Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances \(PFAS\) | US EPA](https://www.epa.gov/chemicals/pfas)

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Contaminants/PFAS.html>

Sincerely,

Gary D. Olsen

Gary D. Olsen, MPA
Village Administrator

Timothy D. Vergara

Timothy D. Vergara, PE
Administrator of Public Works