



Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

The Michigan Department of Environmental, Great Lakes and Energy (MDEGLE), formerly Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) has begun a statewide initiative to test drinking water from all schools that use well water and community water supplies. The test is looking for a group of manmade chemicals called per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). MDEGLE is taking this precautionary step of testing these drinking water sources to determine if public health actions are needed.

It is not uncommon to find low levels of PFAS in drinking water supplies, as PFAS can be found in fire-fighting foams, stain repellants, nonstick cookware, waterproof clothing, food wrappers, and many other household products. They do not break down in the environment and move easily into water.

The EPA set a LHA level for two PFAS in drinking water, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS). The LHA level is 70 parts per trillion (ppt, equal to 70 ng/L) for PFOA and PFOS combined, or individually if only one is present. The EPA has not set health advisory levels for other PFAS compounds. The State of Michigan is using 70 ppt for decision making purposes.

The City of New Buffalo was tested by AECOM, MDEGLE's contractor on July 19, 2018. The test results can be found on the Michigan PFAS Action Response Team website, www.michigan.gov/pfasresponse. The results show that of the PFOA and PFOS samples collected and tested, **2 ppt** were found in the water. This level is below the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) lifetime health advisory (LHA).