



JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



MELANIE LOYZIM
COMMISSIONER

TRANSMITTED VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

October 21, 2021

Ms Christine Almand
Town Manager
225 Water St
Skowhegan ME 04976

Re: Investigation of PFAS in Maine in Town of Skowhegan

Dear Ms Christine Almand,

This letter is to inform you that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is initiating an investigation into the presence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) from the land application of sludge and/or septage in the Town of Skowhegan. This is part of the DEP's statewide investigation for the implementation of [2021 Public Law Chapter 478, An Act To Investigate Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substance Contamination of Land and Groundwater](#), effective October 18, 2021. Your community was identified in the first Tier of prioritized sites to be investigated based upon:

- The anticipated presence of high levels of PFAS substances in sludge or septage applied at a location;
- The volume of sludge or septage applied at a location; or
- The proximity to drinking water supplies.

In addition, the DEP is working closely with the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) to identify sites which are currently being used for the production of agricultural products. Please keep in mind that a site may include several physical locations and may also cross district, town, and county boundaries. Sites are based on decades of licensing information gathered, reviewed and evaluated by the DEP. Tier I sites are anticipated to be sampled beginning November 2021 and will extend through 2022, possibly even into 2023.

As part of our investigation of PFAS within your community, the DEP will request permission to sample soils from the owners of sites where sludge and/or septage were land applied. DEP will also request permission to sample and test drinking water supply from individual homeowners in the direct vicinity of the site for certain PFAS and at no cost to them.

PFAS are a group of man-made chemicals that were used for a long time in many household and industrial products. These chemicals were used to make products that repel water and resist stains and grease. These chemicals are persistent in the environment, which means that they do

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Investigation of PFAS in Maine

not break down easily and scientists are still learning about how these chemicals behave and possible health effects from being exposed to them.

PFAS are considered emerging contaminants and are not currently regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA). As an interim step, U.S. EPA has established a Health Advisory Level of 70 parts per trillion in drinking water for the combined total of perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), which are two of the most common forms of PFAS. In Maine however, emergency legislation became effective June 21, 2021, setting forth an interim drinking water standard of 20 parts per trillion for the sum of six PFAS (PFOA, PFOS, PFNA, PFHxS, PFHpA, and PFDA). [This is described in 2021 Public Law Chapter 82 Resolve, To Protect Consumers of Public Drinking Water by Establishing Maximum Contaminant Levels for Certain Substances and Contaminants.](#) The DEP is using Maine's more stringent standard for its investigation.

We understand that you and your constituents may have questions and concerns regarding our investigation. Any questions you have about the investigation by DEP or that are being conveyed to you through your constituents or legislative aides should be directed to David Madore, Deputy Commissioner and Communications Director, David.Madore@maine.gov, 207-287-5842. You can also visit our webpage located at: <http://www.maine.gov/dep/spills/topics/pfas/index.html>. This webpage is currently under development, but more information about the ongoing investigation is planned to be made available.

Sincerely,



Susanne Miller, Director
Bureau of Remediation and Waste Management