



Barry-Eaton District Health Department

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Thursday, February 14th, 2019

PFAS Detection at Industrial Site in Barry County

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality has identified a site in Hastings, Michigan with high levels of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Some types of PFAS such as perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) may be harmful to human health when ingested (eaten or drank). PFAS were detected on the property of The Viking Corporation, and in lower concentrations in neighboring properties. The PFAS were found in shallow groundwater environmental monitoring wells, not in a drinking water source. Currently, there are no known drinking water sources in the flow of the groundwater found to contain PFAS. The Viking Corporation is currently working with MDEQ to further investigate PFAS contamination and determine next steps.

The Viking Corporation site as well as nearby properties use the City of Hastings municipal water as their drinking water source. Municipal water from the City of Hastings was tested for PFAS in April of 2018, and PFAS were NOT found. Colette Scrimger, Health Officer explained; "At this time, we do not believe that the drinking water in this area is affected by this area of PFAS contamination, and the risk to the public is very, very low." The Michigan PFAS Action Response Team (MPART) is a multi-agency action team to investigate and address PFAS contamination in Michigan. To see the results of local PFAS testing, visit MPART's website at <https://bit.ly/2E5SUFr>. If you have a private well and are interested in testing your water for PFAS, information on sampling and testing can be found at the MPART's website at <https://bit.ly/2E6Mupx>.

PFAS are thought to be harmful to health only when ingested. Although more research is needed, some PFAS may lower the chance of getting pregnant, increase the chance of high blood pressure during pregnancy, increase the chance of thyroid disease, increase cholesterol levels, change immune response, and increase the chance of cancer (especially kidney and testicular cancers).

PFAS have many industrial applications, including waterproofing and firefighting foam. The source of PFAS for this site is firefighting foam used between 1998 or 1999 through 2001. The Viking Corporation site was used to manufacture and test fire suppression equipment, which involved the use of fire-fighting foam containing PFAS from the late 1990's through 2001. Most companies have stopped using PFOS and PFOA.

For more information on PFAS, visit MPART's website at <https://www.michigan.gov/pfasresponse/>. The Barry-Eaton District Health Department can be reached at (269) 945-9516, select 3, then 5.

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