



# News Update

September 29, 2017



**HEALTH**  
DEPARTMENT  
*Caring today for a healthy tomorrow*

## Update on Groundwater near House Street in Belmont



**Health Study Begins  
Water Work First Phase Approved  
More Websites Added  
Fish Needed for Samples**

### Kent County Health Department and MDHHS Begin Health Study Efforts

In response to health concerns over exposure to drinking water contaminated with Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), the Kent County Health Department (KCHD) is working with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to analyze data in the state's cancer incidence registry. This analysis will identify cancer cases in and around the locations where dumping of these chemicals potentially occurred. The analysis will focus on cancer in children (pediatric cancers) and cancers of the urinary (e.g. bladder, kidney) and genital (e.g. testes, ovaries) organs between 1990 and 2014. To determine whether more cases of cancer occurred in the affected areas than would be expected during this time period, cancer rates will be compared to rates of similar cancers in other locations in Kent County. It is estimated that results of this analysis will be available by the first week of November.

In addition to the analysis of this data, KCHD is working with MDHHS to develop a more extensive survey that addresses other health concerns related to PFAS exposure. KCHD staff are currently reviewing a survey created in response to a similar water contamination situation in the Ohio River Valley in the early 2000s to help design the questions to be included in the Kent County survey. It is expected that the process of designing the survey and methods for distribution will take one to two months. Additional updates on the progress of the survey will be included in future newsletters.

If you believe that you should be involved in the study please contact email [brian.hartl@kentcountymi.gov](mailto:brian.hartl@kentcountymi.gov).

### Municipal Water Main Extension Design Work to Begin

On Monday September 25th, the Plainfield Township Board gave approval for the design and engineering work to begin on a new water main that may eventually serve the residents near the House Street Site. "This begins the process," explains Plainfield Charter Township Superintendent Cameron Wyngarden. "If it is determined that municipal water needs to be extended, this initial phase of the work will already be complete. This will ensure that construction, when approved, will begin much sooner."

This initial phase will be performed under a contract with Prein and Newhof and residents can expect to see survey crews from the company working in the area soon.

The proposed main would connect from the existing water tower on Pine Island north of Post Drive, continue east on House Street, go under US131, turn south on Herrington and finally connect to another existing main on Chandler. Construction could be completed by the end of 2018.

### New Websites Established

The MDHHS and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) have joined forces to establish a website dedicated to the PFAS issue in Belmont. The website, [www.michigan.gov/belmont](http://www.michigan.gov/belmont), has information from the state agencies as well as links to local sites.

Plainfield Township has also established a website to communicate the latest information to residents. That website can be found at <http://www.plainfieldmi.org/house-st-ground-water-contamination.html>.

These websites, as well as the KCHD website [www.accesskent.com/Health/PFAS/belmont.htm](http://www.accesskent.com/Health/PFAS/belmont.htm) will all link to each other forming a hub for all communications and information.

### Plainfield Township Holds Staff Education Sessions

In an effort to better serve residents, Plainfield Township has started staff education sessions. The purpose of the sessions is two fold. Township staff will be better equipped to inform residents and will be able to stop the spread of misinformation and rumors. The township is also developing a "Frequently Asked Questions" or FAQ section to help residents quickly find answers. The FAQ will be added to the Plainfield Township website when completed.

### Fish Sampling

The Department on Natural Resources Fisheries Division (DNR) and the DEQ are teaming up to analyze fish specimen for PFAS compounds and is seeking the assistance of area sports persons to analyze the fish from any one lake the DNR/DEQ need 10 specimens from one species. The collectors can freeze the fish and when 10 specimens are collected the DNR arrange for transfer of the samples and provide them to the DEQ for analysis. We are unable at this time to estimate the turnaround time on getting the results.

Sufficient samples have been collected from Freska Lake for bluegill and largemouth bass. The results will be published on the DEQ website when they are available. For more information contact Jay Wesley, Fisheries Division, DNR at 269-685-6851 x 117 and [WesleyJ@michigan.gov](mailto:WesleyJ@michigan.gov).

### Technical Difficulties

In last week's newsletter we asked to hear from you. We asked you to send your email to [KCPFAS@kentcountymi.gov](mailto:KCPFAS@kentcountymi.gov) and tell us what you would like to see in the next meeting, what you wanted in your next newsletter and to tell us how we could better communicate with you.

Something went wrong with our new email address and we were locked out of it for several days this week. The email is up and running again but we are worried that we might have missed your note. If you sent us one last week please resend it. We want to make sure we are hearing from you.

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## Resources

### For information regarding possible health effects of PFAS and PFOA

#### [The Kent County Health Department](#)

616-632-6900

[kcehmail@kentcountymi.gov](mailto:kcehmail@kentcountymi.gov)

#### [Michigan Department of Health and Human Services \(MDHHS\)](#)

1-800-648-6942

### For information about the status of the investigation and water sampling

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Environmental Assistance Center via their online form [HERE](#)

or call 800-662-9278

### For House Street specific site information

#### [Rose and Westra, a Division of GZA](#)

Mark Westra/Lori Powers (616) 258-7234

<mailto:House-Street@gza.com>

### For information about the Plainfield municipal water system

Plainfield Water Department

(616) 363-9660

### For questions about tax / property values

Plainfield Township Assessing Department

Jeff Miller (616) 726-8880

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### In the news this week.

9/25 - [http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2017/09/wolverine\\_pfas\\_texting\\_expands.html](http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2017/09/wolverine_pfas_texting_expands.html)

<http://woodtv.com/2017/09/25/toxic-tap-water-neighbors-worry-about-illegal-dump-sites/>

9/26 - <http://woodtv.com/2017/09/26/homes-built-after-township-noted-possible-contamination/>

<http://woodtv.com/2017/09/25/toxic-tap-water-neighbors-worry-about-illegal-dump-sites/>

9/27 - <http://woodtv.com/2017/09/27/health-dept-studying-cancer-clusters-near-3-dumps/>

9/28 - [http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2017/09/wolverine\\_waste\\_cancer\\_study.html](http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2017/09/wolverine_waste_cancer_study.html)

<http://woodtv.com/2017/09/28/old-photos-map-dumps-linked-to-cancer-study/>

<http://woodtv.com/2017/09/28/wolverine-worldwide-dumping-raises-fish-safety-concerns/>

[http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2017/09/wolverine\\_hufnagel\\_pfas\\_leathe.html](http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2017/09/wolverine_hufnagel_pfas_leathe.html)

9/29 - [http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2017/09/wolverine\\_barrel\\_hide\\_dumps.html](http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2017/09/wolverine_barrel_hide_dumps.html)

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### Next Newsletter

You will receive this newsletter every Friday. If you have question about the content of this newsletter or if there are things that you would like to see covered, please email us at [KCPFAS@kentcountymi.gov](mailto:KCPFAS@kentcountymi.gov).

