



KENT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Test Results Detect PFAS in Eleven Homes in Previously Untested Area

GRAND RAPIDS - The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) requested that the Kent County Department of Public Works (DPW) evaluate and test groundwater from up to 46 properties along Belmont Avenue and Montana Trail to the west, and along House Street, House Court, Crestview and Roguewood Drives south of the North Kent Landfill for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). These homes were not previously within a Wolverine World Wide test zone. DPW agreed to do this testing after staff became aware of the then-legal disposal of waste that likely contained or was treated with PFAS and PFOS in the 1980s. The samples were collected for testing in February 2018. Test results show 11 of the 41 homes tested had detectable levels of PFAS. Concentrations of PFAS in all eleven homes fell below the MDEQ and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) health advisory level of 70 parts per trillion (ppt); the highest registered at 58.6 ppt. Thirty homes had no detectable PFAS. The results of testing did not suggest a specific source of contamination, as some of the homes that had detections were not adjacent to the North Kent Landfill, and some properties which were immediately adjacent to the landfill had no detectable PFAS.

“While the levels are lower than the health advisory for drinking water, we are still concerned for the eleven homes where PFAS was detected,” said Dar Baas, Director of the Department of Public Works. “It is difficult at this time to determine where the contamination is coming from, but we want to act in the best interest of our neighbors. We are taking immediate steps to purchase and install whole house filters in eleven houses where PFAS was detected in the water as a precautionary measure.”

DPW began discussions with the MDEQ in November 2017 regarding tannery waste disposed at the North Kent (Ten Mile) Landfill in the 1980s. Disposal of Wolverine Worldwide waste at the County landfill site was in compliance with State and Federal regulations at the time, and only after the material had been tested and deemed non-hazardous. DPW will continue to work with MDEQ, Plainfield Charter Township, Algoma Township, and our neighbors to determine if the detected PFAS is coming from materials disposed of in the North Kent Landfill or from another source, as well as what steps might need to be taken to remedy the issue.

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