



**AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

September 28, 2023

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## **PFAS Community Update**

### **Latest Updates on PFAS Contamination from Chemfab in Bennington**

In May 2023 the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) received the [Barr Engineering 2022 Annual Report](#), summarizing all of the work that occurred in 2022 pertaining to the PFAS that was emitted and deposited over the northern part of Bennington. The highlights of this 2022 work include:

- [Twelve new wells in the Area of Concern](#) were identified and sampled.
- Bottled water deliveries continued at a limited number of residences.
- Water treatment systems [point of entry (POET) and point of use] continued to be maintained at 41 properties. Six additional POET systems were installed and seven POET systems removed in 2022 (systems are removed as homes are connected to municipal water or water supply sampling shows the well remains below drinking water standards).
- Long Term Monitoring (LTM) occurred at 163 drinking water wells without POETs in 2022. Seven wells were added and three were removed from the LTM program in 2022.
- Long term monitoring to assess natural attenuation of groundwater PFAS occurred at 22 locations. Two of these sampling locations will be removed from this sampling program in 2023 due to consistent non-detect concentrations through 2022.
- Replacement well work continues.

**As part of the Corrective Action Plan for the area, well replacement remains a viable option for providing a long-term drinking water remedy to impacted properties. In 2022:**

- Two contaminated wells that were replaced with new properly sealed wells and completed their sampling regiment. The Point-of-Entry

Treatment (POET) systems were able to be removed, and the wells are not included in the long-term monitoring (LTM) program set up to sample remaining wells in the Bennington Area of Concern

- Two replacement wells were closed following installation in 2022; one for having PFAS in it and one for having naturally occurring radiation in it. Both homes will continue to have Saint Gobain maintain their POETs and provide clean water to the residents.
  - An additional replacement well planning assessment was completed in 2022 with the replacement well being installed this year.
  - One well that was considered for replacement was monitored as part of the replacement well assessment process and met compliance standards. It will now be transferred to the LTM program.
  - Replacement well assessments will continue throughout the coming years on a number of wells where replacement may be a feasible long-term solution.
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## **Water Line Work**

### **Planning for additional water line work in both Bennington and North Bennington**

North Bennington Water Board has had their engineer, Otter Creek Engineering, put in a request for funding for a planning loan (the loan is forgiven) to replace the main water line along Overlea Road, and in the process connect a number of homes (up to 20) to the municipal system. This planning may include extending municipal water to several additional homes along the Bennington/Shafsbury line. Funding for this work is coming from the emerging contaminants provisions in the Federal Infrastructure Bill.

Bennington is considering putting in a request through their engineer, MSK Engineering, to extend additional water lines to several neighborhoods where private water supplies have either been impacted by PFAS or are in areas impacted by PFAS. The exact locations to be evaluated are still to be determined. Funding for this work would also come from the same funding source as the work in North Bennington.

This work will continue through this year and into next year (2024), with the earliest water line installation work potentially occurring in 2025 and into 2026.

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## **Chemfab Building Cleaning**

Cleaning of the Chemfab building on Water Street began in early September.

This cleanup is being completed per the requirement of the Consent Order between the State and Saint Gobain. The cleaning process was negotiated, as there are no promulgated standards for PFAS concentrations in or on building materials. The first step is the removal of asbestos bearing materials in the building. This work is overseen by the Department of Health, Asbestos and Lead Regulatory Program. Once this is completed Saint Gobain's contractors, DEC, and a contractor who will be overseeing this work on the state, will meet at the facility to go over the State's expectations for PFAS cleanup per the [Building Corrective Action Plan](#).

The goal of the cleaning of the Chemfab building is to remove as much PFAS from inside the building as possible. Calculations estimate about 750 grams of PFOA are present in soft insulation materials and 13 grams of PFOA are on hard surfaces, as determined by wipe samples of these surfaces. Additionally, there is also PFOA in the carpeting and ceiling tiles in the office area. All of the soft materials (insulation, office materials) will be removed and properly disposed of at a hazardous waste landfill in Michigan.

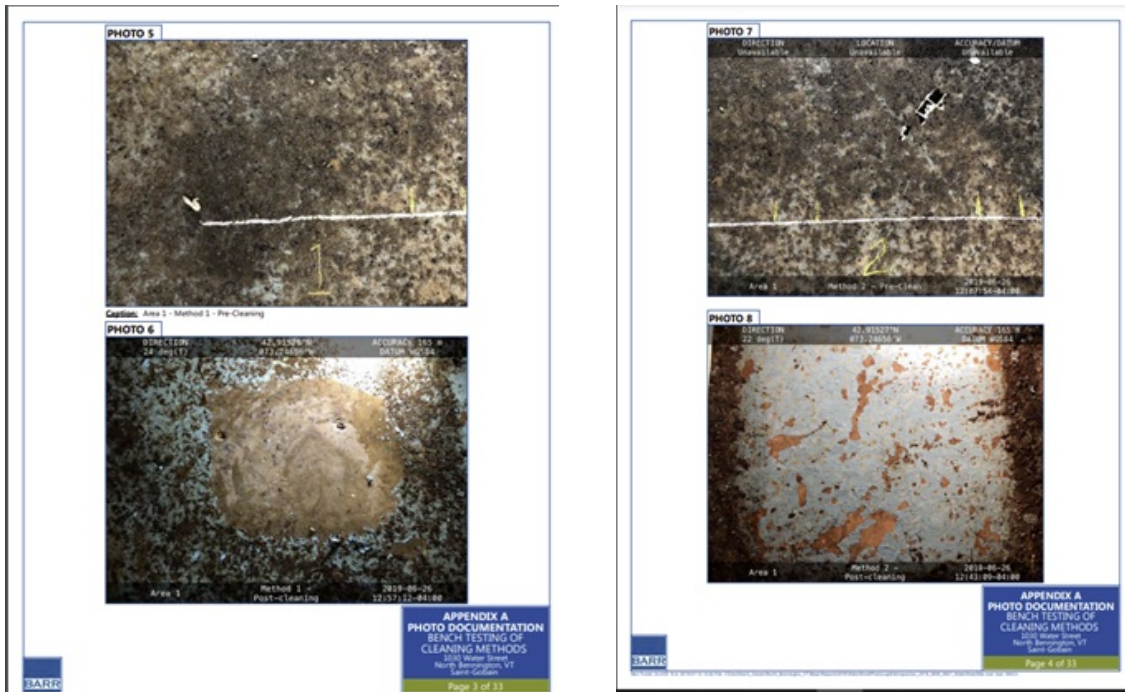
To assist in the negotiated cleanup process, of the hard materials, the State had Saint Gobain's contractor, Barr Engineering, and their subcontractors, with oversight by the State's contractor, perform an initial cleaning study (bench test) to determine the most appropriate cleaning method and expected removal efficiencies. The cleaning evaluation included 1) manual removal, 2) hot water pressure washing, 3) degreaser washing, and 4) a combination of hot water pressure washing and degreaser. The evaluation occurred on both the concrete floor and the steel beams in the building. The cleaning approach that removed the most PFOA from these hard surfaces, not surprisingly, was option 4) a combination of hot water pressure washing and degreaser. The bench test on the floor showed 232 ug before cleaning and 4 ug after cleaning (a greater than 98% reduction in mass). On the iron truss the bench test showed 41 ug before cleaning and 5 ug after cleaning (an 88% reduction in mass). Using these values, it is calculated that approximately 1 gram of PFOA will remain in the building after the cleaning is completed utilizing this approach. This reduction, from the original estimated mass of greater than 760 grams of PFOA has been determined to meet the goal for the building cleanup of removing as much PFAS (PFOA) from inside the building as possible.

The cleanup of the building will be performed by Saint Gobain contractors (Barr Engineering, CT Male Engineering of New York, and Precision Environmental Services of NY) and overseen by a State environmental contractor (Atlas Technical Consultants, LLC). The ASTM E3106 – Standard Guide for Science-Based and Risk-Based Cleaning Process Development and Validation for visual assessment will be used (see pictures below for clearer

visualization of what this means). Utilization of the visual assessment will achieve the cleanup criteria demonstrated by the bench testing completed during the initial cleaning study described above.

Water generated in this work will be collected and pumped into a frac tank where it will then be treated (pumped through granular activated carbon much like the process used in the point of entry treatment systems that operated in many of homes). This will occur under a discharge permit and the clean water will be discharged to the municipal wastewater system. The treatment carbon will then be sent out for regeneration or proper disposal.

This work is expected to take about three months and should be completed before the end of 2023.



Results of the initial cleaning study, visually comparing a floor surface (left) and I-beam (right) pre-cleaning and post-cleaning. Picture of floor pre-cleaning and post-cleaning. (Picture of I-beam pre-cleaning and post-cleaning.)

Cleaned Areas being Sampled using Swipes during the initial cleaning study to evaluate the different proposed cleaning methodologies.



Caution: Worker collecting post-cleaning wipe sample

APPENDIX A  
PHOTO DOCUMENTATION  
BENCH TESTING OF  
CLEANING METHODS  
100 Water Street  
North Ferrisburgh, VT  
Salem Colwell  
Page 8 of 33



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## For More Information

- To find out more about Vermont's PFAS sampling plan and information for affected communities, visit the DEC [PFOA webpage](#).
- For more information about health and PFAS in drinking water, visit the Health Department's [website](#).

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Department of Environmental Conservation  
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources  
1 National Life Drive, Main 2  
Montpelier, VT 05620-3520



Vermont Agency of Natural Resources | 1 National Life Drive, Davis 2, Montpelier, VT 05620-3901

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