

News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

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Elevated Levels of PFCs Found Near Former Salem Landfill

Concord, NH - The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) announced today that groundwater monitoring well results collected at the former L.L.&S. Construction and Demolition Debris Landfill in Salem, NH, showed elevated concentrations of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS). In response to a request from NHDES, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) collected and analyzed water samples from 10 monitoring wells adjacent to the landfill. The test results showed that the groundwater samples contained PFOA concentrations ranging from 2.5 parts per trillion (ppt) to 560 ppt, and PFOS concentrations ranging from 1.3 ppt to 260 ppt. New Hampshire's Ambient Groundwater Quality Standard was recently set at 70 ppt for PFOA, PFOS, and for PFOA and PFOS combined. To further evaluate the extent of the impact, NHDES will be sampling nearby water supply wells in the vicinity of the landfill.

The 16 acre former landfill is unlined, operated from 1978 to 1984, and received construction and demolition debris. The landfill was capped with soil and loam in 1986. The site is currently operating as L.L. & S. Inc. Lowell Road Wood Processing Facility. Portions of the site were reportedly utilized as an auto salvage yard as early as the 1950s. Historically several fires have been associated with the landfill property dating back to the mid-1980s. It is suspected that aqueous film forming foam (AFFF), a fire fighting agent containing PFCS, may have been used to fight some of those fires. NHDES began monitoring groundwater at the site in 1984; monitoring has continued to be conducted by the site owner under a Groundwater Management Permit issued by NHDES.

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