

News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: June 30, 2016

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Groundwater Results from the Former Coakley Landfill Contain Elevated Concentrations of PFCs

CONCORD, NH - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) have received preliminary results for groundwater samples collected at the former Coakley Landfill in North Hampton and Greenland, New Hampshire. The results show elevated concentrations of perfluorochemicals (PFCs), including perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS).

In response to a request from local officials and residents, the Coakley Landfill Group (a group of potentially responsible parties [PRPs]) collected and analyzed water samples from 8 monitoring wells at or adjacent to the landfill under the supervision of the U.S. EPA. These wells were previously installed to monitor the potential impact of the landfill on groundwater. The preliminary sampling results, which are still under third party review for quality assurance, showed that the groundwater samples contained combined PFOA and PFOS concentrations ranging from 71 parts per trillion (ppt) to 1108 ppt, with all wells sampled showing combined PFOA/PFOS concentrations above New Hampshire's Ambient Groundwater Quality Standard of 70 ppt.

To further evaluate the extent of the impact, the PRP will be required to expand PFC sampling to monitoring wells outside of the landfill footprint. In addition, NHDES will be contacting nearby residents with private drinking water wells to schedule appointments to collect water samples that will be analyzed by EPA's regional laboratory for the presence of PFCs.

The former Coakley Landfill, a federal Superfund site, received municipal and industrial wastes from 1972 to 1982. From 1982 to 1985, when land-filling activities terminated, the site received incinerator residue from the Portsmouth Refuse-to-Energy Facility at the Pease Air Force Base. The landfill was capped in 1998 to help prevent further migration of groundwater contamination. The site groundwater contamination is managed within Groundwater Management Zone (GMZ) under the provisions of a Groundwater Management Permit issued by NHDES. The Permit requires regular monitoring of water quality issues within the GMZ, which include the presence of other contaminants of concern including arsenic, manganese and 1,4-dioxane. Remedy protectiveness of human health and the environment at the site are reviewed by the U.S. EPA and NHDES every five years. The next Five Year-Review is scheduled to be finalized in September 2016.

For more information, please contact Jim Murphy, U.S. EPA (617) 721-2868, or Drew Hoffman, NHDES at (603) 271-6778.

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