

**Media Contact:**

Jake O'Neill

[joneill@clf.org](mailto:joneill@clf.org)

(617) 850-1709

**CLF and Partners Petition for New Drinking Water Standards in Vermont**

*Urge state to protect the public from harmful PFAS chemicals*

**October 25, 2018 (MONTPELIER, VT)** - Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) and several partner organizations have filed a [petition](#) to push the State of Vermont to adopt new drinking water standards that protect the public from the dangers of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS). Without a new standard, public water systems in Vermont are not required to regularly monitor for PFAS compounds or to treat water with unsafe levels of these toxic chemicals.

"The state has an obligation to protect public health, and it must take immediate action to prevent exposure to PFAS compounds in our drinking water," said Jen Duggan, Vice President and Director of CLF Vermont. "The current practice of regulating our water chemical-by-chemical is broken. It's no secret that PFAS compounds are toxic and negatively affect our health, and the technology exists to remove these harmful substances from our water. In the absence of federal safeguards, the Agency of Natural Resources must protect Vermonters."

PFAS are suspected carcinogens and have been linked to a variety of severe health problems including learning disorders in infants and children, fertility and pregnancy issues, and impaired liver, thyroid, and pancreatic function.

PFAS have been found in waters throughout Vermont, including in over 400 drinking water wells in Bennington County, in private and public water supplies near the Southern Vermont Airport in Clarendon and in a drinking water supply for Grafton Elementary school.

CLF is joined by Rights & Democracy, Vermont Natural Resources Council, Vermont Public Interest Research Group, and Toxics Action Center on the petition. The groups are calling on the Agency of Natural Resources to adopt a treatment technique drinking water standard to protect Vermonters from the PFAS class of chemicals instead of regulating these dangerous substances one by one. Existing technology can treat unsafe levels of PFAS in drinking water, and the petition requests that the state require public water systems to adopt these solutions.

**Additional quotes:**

"Our members have a right to clean drinking water," said Johanna DeGraffenreid, Program Director for the Jobs, Justice, and Climate Campaign at Rights & Democracy. "Vermont must act to put in place standards that protect Vermonters from toxic PFAS in drinking water."

"We have seen the adverse health effects PFAS compounds have caused right here in Vermont as a result of contaminated water. This petition seeks to ensure that public water systems do not continue to pose a serious health risk to Vermonters," added Vermont Natural Resources Council Policy and Water Program Director Jon Groveman.

“If you weigh the cost of protecting the public from these dangerous toxins versus the cost of doing nothing and allowing people to be harmed by the chemicals, the choice is clear,” said Paul Burns, Executive Director of Vermont Public Interest Research Group. “Vermonters deserve safe drinking water.”

"Drinking water contamination by this toxic chemical is a national problem affecting millions of people across the country, but EPA has failed to take serious action to protect communities. Vermont must lead and set strong regulations to ensure that our drinking water is safe," said Shaina Kasper, Vermont Director at Toxics Action Center.

*Experts are available for further comment.*

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