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Village of Lake in the Hills Village of Cary

Press Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 18, 2022

Villages of Lake in the Hills and Cary Seek Representation Following Detection of PFAS in Certain Wells

Lake in the Hills and Cary, IL – The Village of Lake in the Hills and the Village of Cary will seek to obtain compensation for the adverse impacts created by the detection of PFAS in select components of their municipal water systems. Low levels of PFAS chemicals were detected at some of the water production sites in both Lake in the Hills and Cary in early 2021.

According to the IEPA, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (“PFAS”) are a group of man-made chemicals that includes PFOA, PFOS, GenX, and thousands of other chemicals. Used by industries across the globe, PFAS chemicals are used in many consumer, commercial, and industrial processes to make everyday items non-stick, water-resistant, or stain-resistant. Scientific studies have shown that exposure to some PFAS in the environment may be linked to harmful health effects in humans and animals.

PFAS are currently unregulated in public water systems at the federal and state levels, although both the Illinois EPA (“IEPA”) and U.S. EPA have begun the process to establish drinking water standards for this group of contaminants. Statewide testing of all 1,749 community water supplies was initiated by the IEPA in 2021 to aid in possible development of a future regulatory drinking water standard for PFAS.

The Village of Lake in the Hills and the Village of Cary will execute legal services agreements to obtain representation in an investigation and possible civil action related to the PFAS contamination. The firms will represent both Villages as part of a class action lawsuit involving other impacted government agencies and private contractors.

The firms will assist in the investigation of the presence of contaminants throughout the system and its potential sources, evaluate the potential to recover the costs associated with the contamination, provide advice, and represent the Village of Lake in the Hills and the Village of Cary in any legal action against parties potentially responsible for the contamination. Any funds obtained are intended to be used for remediation, modifying the treatment processes, and managing increased treatment costs that might be necessary to provide the public safe drinking water.

While the amount of PFAS did not reach levels that would mandate closure in either Village, elected officials and staff proactively took the affected water system components offline out of an abundance of caution to protect the public. The components remain offline pending development of formal

drinking water standards for PFAS that will be issued by the IEPA and U.S. EPA once their studies conclude. The establishment of these drinking water standards would determine whether modifications to the water treatment processes are necessary.

The Lake in the Hills Public Works Department took Well 6 out of service after testing showed the presence of two unregulated chemicals, perfluorobutanesulfonic acid (PFBS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA). Well 6 is located near the intersection of Council Trail and Jessie Road.

“The health and wellness of our citizens comes first for the Village of Lake in the Hills,” said Village President Ray Bogdanowski. “Though not required by state or national agencies, the Village Board of Trustees and staff decided to act quickly to eliminate additional risk to our community.”

The Village of Cary determined through testing that low levels of two unregulated PFAS compounds, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorohexanoic acid (PFHxA), were present in water sampled from the shared water treatment plant for Well #8 and Well #9. Both are shallow groundwater wells located along Spring Street, south of downtown Cary. The shared treatment plant was taken offline. PFAS was not detected at any of the Village’s other water supply wells.

“The Village of Cary has taken a proactive approach to ensure our water system continues to meet all state and federal standards,” stated Mayor Mark Kownick. “We are dedicated to providing safe drinking water to our community.”

The drinking water in the Village of Lake in the Hills and the Village of Cary continues to meet all federal and state drinking water standards and continues to be safe to drink. Due to the resilience of their water systems, a professional staff of water treatment plant operators, and available capacity versus current demand, both villages have the luxury of temporarily eliminating the flows from the affected wells, even though this is not required by the IEPA or U.S. EPA.

Both Villages seek to preserve and enhance the highest quality of life, safeguard public health and safety, and promote economic growth by providing services that are well-planned, environmentally sensitive, and cost-effective.

You can learn more about the Lake in the Hills response at lith.org or contact the Public Works Department at 847-960-7500. Learn more about the Cary response at caryillinois.com or contact the Public Works Department at 847-639-0003.

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