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This Groundwater Awareness Week, Clean Wisconsin calls on lawmakers to fund more well testing

As we mark national Groundwater Awareness Week, Clean Wisconsin and our partners are calling for \$2.5 million in additional state budget funding for statewide drinking water well testing that prioritizes low-income households and high-risk areas. The push for funding comes as the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conduct a [Superfund Assessment](#) in the Town of Stella. Superfund sites are areas heavily contaminated by hazardous substances that require long term pollution cleanup.

“The devastating PFAS contamination we’re seeing in the Town of Stella was only discovered because the DNR conducted groundwater well testing across the state to gain a better understanding of this form of pollution in our rural communities,” explains Clean Wisconsin Water and Agriculture Program Director Sara Walling. Initial testing results in the Town of Stella showed toxic PFAS levels as high as 11,300 ppt, making the area one of the worst PFAS pollution hotspots in the country. The EPA recently set drinking water limits for PFAS at just 4 ppt, and the DNR is proposing the same standard in its most recent rulemaking for both groundwater and municipal drinking water.

“About 66% of Wisconsinites rely on groundwater for their drinking water, and almost half of them live in rural areas with private wells,” Walling says. “We’ve seen private wells across the state contaminated with nitrates, bacteria, arsenic, pesticides and toxic PFAS chemicals, putting the health of Wisconsin families at risk. Everyone deserves safe water, and testing is the first step to provide that.”

In the coming months, Clean Wisconsin will be working with the legislature, and especially the members of the Joint Committee on Finance, to secure new funding for private well testing.

*On behalf of its more than 30,000 members, supporters and its coalition partners,
Clean Wisconsin works to combat climate change and pollution in our air, water, and land, and ensure a healthy future for every
Wisconsin community.*

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