COMMUNITY UPDATE

TACONIC PLASTICS

NEW YORK STATE | Department of Environmental Conservation

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is working closely with the New York State Department of Health (DOH) to comprehensively investigate and address contamination in the Petersburgh community from past operations at Taconic Plastics to ensure the full protection of public health and the environment. This Community Update provides information to help keep the public informed about DEC's stringent oversight of the Taconic Plastics facility cleanup investigation, public health-related response measures, and air permitting updates.

Remedial Investigation Activities

Taconic Plastics (Taconic), located at 136 Coonbrook Road in the Town of Petersburgh, Rensselaer County (see Figure on last page), has been identified as a source of contamination from the industrial use of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). In 2016, DEC executed an order on consent with Taconic to perform the investigation, interim cleanup measures (IRMs), and evaluation of cleanup options for contaminated soil, sediment, and groundwater.

Since identification, actions have been taken by Taconic, DEC, DOH, and the Rensselaer County Health Department to address potential exposures to site-related contaminants in both the public and private drinking water sources in the Town of Petersburgh. As described below, this has included upgrades to the Village public water supply treatment system, as well as providing alternate water supplies to over 200 homeowners that rely on private wells.

Furthermore, since the investigation began, Taconic performed extensive testing of on- and off-site environmental media to determine the nature and extent of contamination from facility operations. Recent testing has been performed throughout the area surrounding the facility to evaluate the impacts of historical aerial deposition. Surface water sampling has been completed during several sampling events to assess the presence of site contaminants in surface water resources, including an on-site pond/wetland, ponds and creeks in the area, as well as the Little Hoosick River with some of its nearby tributaries. Previous on-site sampling indicates that the groundwater on the property is impacted by site-related contamination. Eleven groundwater wells have been installed and sampled to understand impacts to the bedrock groundwater aquifer and assess movement of contamination within the groundwater system. Groundwater sampling is underway to assess current conditions and results are expected by fall 2026. A comprehensive Remedial Investigation report by Taconic's consultant is due to the DEC for review by the end of 2026.

Interim Remedial Measure(s)

PFAS Source Removal

DEC approved a supplemental investigation work plan in August 2021 which required Taconic to perform additional sampling of contaminated soils, groundwater, and surface water in the vicinity of Building 1. The data were used to evaluate options for an interim remedial measure (IRM) at the site to address contaminated source material. An IRM is a cleanup activity that may be performed when a source of contamination or exposure pathway (the way in which a person may contact contamination) can be effectively addressed without extensive investigation and evaluation. Following DEC approval of an IRM work plan, approximately 300 tons of soil/sediment with PFOA levels ranging as high as 7,100 parts per trillion (ppt) were removed and properly disposed of at an approved landfill in 2024. The

excavation behind Building 1 was subsequently backfilled and restored following removal of the contaminated soil. Post-IRM groundwater and surface water samples have been collected and are currently undergoing data validation prior to submittal to DEC.

On-Site Groundwater Removal & Treatment

Taconic installed a granular activated carbon (GAC) treatment system in 2018 to remove site contaminants from groundwater pumped from the on-site production wells. Since treatment began, over six million gallons of on-site PFAS-contaminated groundwater have been extracted and treated. Groundwater concentrations of PFOA in the vicinity average 3,800 ppt, equating to approximately 20 lbs of PFOA removed from the environment. Pumping and treating the groundwater in this manner controls off-site migration of site contaminants. Taconic recently conducted a pumping test on one of the production wells to evaluate ways to improve hydraulic capture and groundwater withdrawal efficiency.

Fish and Wildlife Updates

As part of the remedial investigation, Taconic's consultants performed a Fish and Wildlife Impact Analysis (FWIA) to determine potential impacts to fish and wildlife from site-related contamination on and near the site. As part of the FWIA, Taconic sampled fish tissue from the Little Hoosic River and Coon Brook. DEC is currently evaluating the data.

Exposure Assessment

As part of the remedial investigation, Taconic's consultants are performing a qualitative human health exposure assessment (QHHEA) to determine how people may contact site-related contamination on and near the site. A scope of work for the QHHEA was approved in May 2022. As part of the QHHEA, DEC and DOH requested Taconic perform testing on various locally produced agricultural products (e.g., fruits and vegetables, maple syrup, eggs, milk, and beef) to identify potential exposure pathways through food. A work plan for sampling was approved in December 2022 and Taconic contacted community members for participation in the assessment by volunteering to provide samples.

Samples of various fruits and vegetables, maple syrup, eggs, and beef were collected from individual private properties. Available or new soil and water data from sampled properties were also included in the assessment. This work is further detailed in the Phase 2B Interim Deliverable (October 2024) found at the hyperlink location below:

https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/108820.html

Currently, there are no health-based soil or food guidelines to evaluate garden soil or produce and the research on uptake of PFAS in plants is in the early stages. Based on the current research findings, the amount of PFAS in your garden food is dependent on many factors including, but not limited to, the amount and type of PFAS in your soil and irrigation water, soil properties, and the type/part of plant being grown and consumed. Current research suggests that the fruiting portions of plants (e.g., tomatoes, cucumbers, corn kernels) have a lower likelihood of PFAS accumulation than leafy vegetables (e.g., lettuce, spinach) and a plant's shoots and leaves.

There are many important benefits to growing and consuming your own fruits and vegetables. However, if you are concerned about PFAS in your produce, you may consider eating the parts of plants that would likely have lower PFAS (e.g., the fruiting portions of plants).

The following list provides additional ways to reduce exposure to PFAS in soil, water and homegrown produce. Not every action listed will be feasible for every circumstance, however each action that can be taken is a way to reduce PFAS exposure.

- Always wash your hands after gardening and before preparing or eating food.

- Always wash fruits and vegetables with clean water before eating to remove soil and other particles.
- Peel root and tuber vegetables like potatoes or yams and remove the outer leaves of leafy vegetables.
- If your water has high levels of PFAS contamination, consider irrigating plants with stored rainwater (if using a rain barrel, avoid contact with edible parts of the plant) and irrigate with well water only when necessary. You may also consider irrigating with carbon filtered water provided that the filter is properly maintained, and the garden is small (e.g., a small container garden). For large gardens, using carbon filtered water may not be feasible because the larger volumes of water needed to irrigate would require more frequent filter changes.
- Add compost or manure from an uncontaminated source to increase organic matter in the soil. Adding clean organic matter to the soil reduces the availability for PFAS to be taken up into the plants.
- If soil from your garden has high levels of PFAS contamination, consider planting raised beds with clean soil to grow fruit and vegetables.

Avoid using biosolid fertilizers in the garden. Biosolids are a product of the wastewater treatment process and may contain PFAS. Biosolid fertilizers may be labeled as containing biosolids, residuals, or municipal waste.

Point of Entry Treatment Systems

New York State continues to prioritize the protection of the Petersburgh community by addressing any potential public exposure to contamination though drinking water supplies. In addition to the investigation and interim remedial activities, the order on consent also provides for Taconic to perform water sampling and provide alternate water supplies at no cost to qualifying and affected property owners within the currently defined area of interest (AOI). The programs are being administered by Taconic with oversight by DEC in partnership with DOH, local authorities, and environmental engineering consultants. Point of Entry Treatment (POET) systems were installed and are maintained by DEC at 104 properties outside of the AOI and in the Petersburgh area, and 103 POET systems are installed and maintained by Taconic within the AOI around the facility as defined in DEC's order on consent.

Who Do You Contact if You Want Your Well Tested?

Homeowners in the Petersburgh area using a private well for drinking water may contact NYSDOH (email: beei@health.ny.gov, phone: 518-402-7860), or the DEC POET Hotline (888-459-8667) to request a sample of their water. Sampling is typically performed in coordination with DEC after authorization by DOH. Once DOH receives the analytical results, an alternate water supply (AWS) may be recommended. If an AWS is offered and accepted by the owner, DEC will coordinate on providing to the property.

Public Water Supply

The Petersburgh water supply has recently received significant upgrades under the purview of DOH, the Rensselaer County Health Department, and DEC. A Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) treatment system was initially installed in 2016 to remove PFAS contaminants from groundwater withdrawn from the supply wells. Recent upgrades and improvements included:

- Installation of a new GAC building and piping;
- Installation of a new electronic control and automation system;
- Installation of a new generator, electrical service, and treatment building electrical upgrades.

The GAC treatment system was required by the Order between DEC and Taconic. The operation, maintenance, and sampling manual

was updated to reflect the upgrades and ensure PFAS is removed from the Town's drinking water supply. To ensure the treatment system performs as designed and determine when the GAC media needs to be replaced, the water supply is routinely monitored at multiple locations.

Air Permitting Updates

Key submittals have been completed for the Taconic air permit and associated air toxic review since 2024. Taconic is advancing its air permit renewal and associated air toxic review with multiple technical submittals to DEC.

Taconic submitted the initial permit renewal application on March 4, 2024, and a revised application on May 29, 2024.

Updates and improvements have been completed to oven emission collection equipment and data monitoring equipment.

The air dispersion modeling protocol was transmitted in April 2024. Pursuant to the State Administrative Procedures Act (SAPA), the current permit will remain in effect until new permit issuance.

Multiple iterations of chemical lists have been submitted to DEC in support of the ongoing air toxic review between February to November 2025. DEC shared a working copy of the new permit with the facility in February 2025 for comment.

DEC's Division of Air Resources has been reviewing the approach to calculate a worst-case potential to emit for volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and HAPs from the oven room operation. DEC will continue to respond to all complaints and evaluate facility operations. Concerns can be directed to the Division of Air Resources contact listed on the next page.

Petersburgh Landfill Status

DEC entered into an Order on Consent with the Towns of Petersburgh and Berlin in 2020 to address leachate seep management at the landfill. The Town of Petersburgh has hired an environmental engineering consultant to assess the leachate seeps at the landfill. Once the assessment of leachate has been completed, an evaluation of treatment options will be conducted. A treatment option will then be selected and a work plan will be developed and implemented to collect and treat leachate at the landfill.

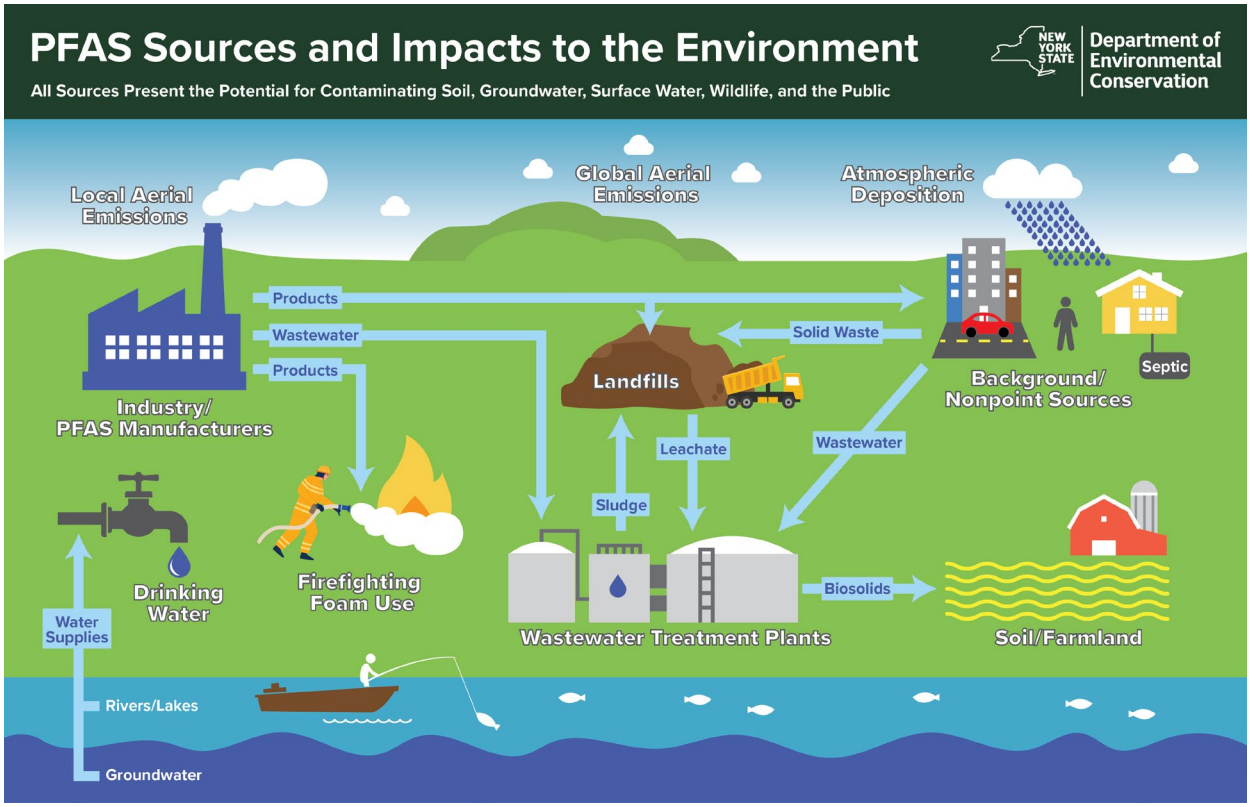
What Are PFAS?

PFAS are a group of widely used and long-lasting manufactured chemical compounds. PFAS, or "forever chemicals" have been used in a variety of industrial and consumer products, as shown in the graphic, since 1950. PFAS are receiving increased attention due to their presence in water, air, fish, and soil from releases.

For more information on PFAS, including the history and use of PFAS visit the websites listed in the resources section of this newsletter.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF PFAS

The available information on the health effects associated with PFAS, like many chemicals, comes from studies of high-level exposure in animals. Less is known about the chances of human health effects occurring from lower levels of PFAS exposure, such as from drinking water. As a result, finding lower levels of chemicals in drinking water prompts DOH and DEC to make recommendations that people take steps to reduce exposures. Learn more about NYS PFAS and health studies at www.health.ny.gov/chemicalsandhealth.



How is PFAS Removed from Drinking Water?

Filtration is a common process used to treat and remove contaminants from drinking water. Not all filters are effective at removing PFAS. Use of activated carbon, which is commonly referred to as GAC (Granular Activated Carbon), is a well-established approach for purifying water and removing PFAS. PFAS are trapped in tiny “holes” or pores within activated carbon particles by a process called adsorption.

If results of private water supply well sampling exceed MCLs and following referral by DOH, a POET system will be offered to be installed, monitored, and maintained by DEC or by Taconic, depending on property location. A typical DEC POET system is shown in the photo to the right.



Point of Entry Treatment System and Maintenance Sampling

How did PFAS get in my water?

Contamination discovered in the Town of Petersburgh water supply was traced back to Taconic Plastics, and an investigation is being conducted by Taconic with DEC oversight to

identify the nature and extent of the PFAS contamination in the groundwater surrounding the facility. This began with on-site and near-site investigations and sampling of environmental media, including soil, groundwater (both the overburden and bedrock aquifers), surface water, and sediment.

Currently, the investigation has moved into off-site areas and extensive sampling has been conducted in off-site soils, groundwater, surface water, and sediments in the area. The remedial investigation will include a fish and wildlife impact assessment, as well as a human health exposure assessment. Both assessments are underway, and sampling of biota tissue, as well as locally produced agricultural products has been performed.

Next Steps

The existing data are being evaluated for completeness and a draft Remedial Investigation Report is due to DEC later this year. After the site investigation is complete, Taconic, with oversight from DEC, will conduct a feasibility study. This study uses information developed during the site investigation to develop and evaluate alternative approaches to clean up and prevent exposure to contamination related to the site. DEC will then develop a draft cleanup plan, called a Proposed Remedial Action Work Plan. This plan describes the cleanup actions preferred by DEC, or, if warranted, a proposal for no action or no further action.

DEC and DOH are planning an Availability Session for late summer/early fall. A separate announcement will be made with details for this availability session.

PROJECT CONTACTS

Department of Environmental Conservation
For questions related to the site, surface water, groundwater and drinking water sampling, and PFAS source evaluation:

Christopher Monaco, Project Manager
(518) 402-8059 I christopher.monaco@dec.ny.gov

For questions related to air emissions, emissions controls, and to report potential air permit violations:
Yi Nan, Division of Air Project Manager
(518) 357-2358 yi.nan@dec.ny.gov

To determine if your property is eligible for sampling, contact
the NYSDOH (email: beei@health.ny.gov, phone: 518-402-7860) or the DEC POET System Hotline (24/7) at 1-888-459-8667
For questions related to the provision of an alternate water supply (i.e., bottled water or POET systems):

David Chiusano, Project Director
(518) 402-9813 I David.Chiusano@dec.ny.gov

Department of Health
For health-related questions or to determine if your property is eligible for sampling, contact:
Angela Martin, Project Manager
(518) 473-4671 I beei@health.ny.gov

RESOURCES

DEC Petersburgh Webpage

- https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/108820.html

DOH PFAS Webpage

- https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/chemicals/chemicals_and_health/

Sign up to receive updates by email:

- www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html

Plot Date: 12/29/2022 Plotted By: Sisson, Evan
Document Path: P:\Taconic\3.0 Remedial Investigation\2022 IID\GIS\MXDs\Taconic Site Plan Fig 2.mxd
Unnamed Stream 2
Unnamed Pond 2
Unnamed Stream 1
Coon Brook Rd
Warehouse
Barn
PW 3
Building 1
Russell Rd
Unnamed Pond 1
PW 2
PW 1
NY-22
Little Hoosic River
PW 4
Unnamed Pond 3
Site Boundary
Inactive Drywell
Production Well Location
Utilities
Sanitary Sewer
Storm Ditch
Storm Sewer
Culvert
Natural Gas Tank
Pond
Leach Field
Fume Eliminators
Sludge Roll-off Storage Pad
Building Footprint
Tax Parcel Boundaries
0
250
500
1,000
Feet
FIGURE 1
TACONIC
Finding a better way
SITE LAYOUT AND FEATURES
PARSONS
301 PLAINFIELD ROAD, SUITE 350, SYRACUSE, NY 13212 • 315-451-9560