

# COMMUNITY UPDATE

## TACONIC PLASTICS



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 Petersburg 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 remedial investigation, public health-related response measures, and air permitting updates.

### Remedial Investigation Activities

Taconic Plastics (Taconic), located at 136 Coon Brook Road in Petersburg, NY, 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 remedial measures (IRMs), and evaluation of cleanup options for contaminated soil, sediment, and groundwater. Actions were previously taken by Taconic, DEC, and New York State and Rensselaer County Health Departments to address potential exposures to site-related contaminants in drinking water in the Town of Petersburg. Since 2018, under the direction of DEC, Taconic performed extensive testing of on- and off-site environmental media; the objective being to define 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. Sampling teams collected 94 soil samples from 37 unique off-site locations, 85 surface water samples, and 85 co-located sediment samples. Surface water sampling occurred throughout the potentially affected area during three separate sampling events. Previous on-site sampling indicates that the groundwater in both the overburden and the bedrock aquifer at the site is impacted by contamination. Seven new bedrock wells have been installed, characterized, and sampled to understand impacts to the bedrock groundwater aquifer and assess movement (i.e. fate and transport) of contamination within the groundwater system.

DEC approved a supplemental investigation work plan in August 2021 which requires Taconic to perform additional sampling of contaminated soils, groundwater, and surface water in the vicinity of Building 1, with the objective of assessing options for an interim remedial measure (IRM) at the site. A work plan for the IRM is being developed and is expected to include sediment and subsurface soil removal, backfill, and swale reconstruction behind Building 1, with plans to complete the IRM in 2023.

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 that Taconic perform testing on various locally produced agricultural products (e.g., fruits and vegetables, maple syrup, eggs, milk, and beef and chicken meat) to identify potential exposure pathways through food. A work plan for sampling was approved in December 2022 and Taconic began reaching out to community members for participation. Sampling is expected to be ongoing throughout 2023.

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

New York State continues to prioritize the protection of the community by addressing any potential public exposure to contamination through 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. The programs are being administered by Taconic under the direction of 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 89 properties in the Petersburg area, and 103 POET systems are installed and maintained by Taconic within the area of interest around the facility as defined in the DEC Order on Consent. Taconic also installed and maintains a Granular Activated Carbon treatment system on the Town of Petersburg's municipal water supply system.

### WHO DO YOU CONTACT IF YOU WANT YOUR WELL TESTED?

If you live in the Petersburg area and your well has not been tested, you likely qualify for sampling if interested. Please contact the DEC Call Center (24/7) at 1-888-459-8667 to have sampling scheduled.

### Air Permitting Updates

Taconic has proposed to replace an existing control device. To the extent feasible, additional process

emission points will be ducted to the new air pollution control device. A permit modification to install the new control device will be submitted in 2023, with anticipation of construction in or by 2024.

- Taconic will submit a permit renewal application on or by June 4, 2024.
- Stack testing will be required for the new control device. Other Test Method-45 (OTM-45) testing, a method for measuring 50 PFAS in air emissions from stationary sources, will be required.
- Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) 313 Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) has been updated. EPA issued a final rule to update the TRI chemical list to identify five additional PFAS subject to reporting requirements. TRI data are reported to EPA annually by facilities in certain industry sectors, including federal facilities, that manufacture, process, or otherwise use TRI-listed chemicals above certain quantities.

A facility-wide inspection was recently completed, no compliance issues were noted, and DEC's Division of Air Resources will continue to respond to all complaints and evaluate facility operations. Concerns can be directed to the Division of Air contact listed on the next page.

## 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](http://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 sampling exceed MCLs, with permission from the qualifying property owner, a POET system will be installed by the DEC’s environmental engineering consultant, or Taconic’s environmental engineering consultant. Maintenance of the GAC filter is also performed by the engineering consultants and includes pre- and post-filter sampling and filter change-out, as necessary. A typical activated carbon filtration system, paid for, installed, and maintained by DEC, is shown in the photo above.



Point of Entry Treatment System and Maintenance Sampling

## How did PFAS get in my water?

Contamination discovered in the Town of Petersburg water supply was traced back to Taconic Plastics, and a remedial investigation is being conducted by Taconic to identify the nature and extent of the PFAS contamination in the groundwater surrounding the in region 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 includes 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 is planned to inform these assessments.

## Next Steps

The existing data set is being evaluated for completeness, and additional sampling will be planned to finish the state superfund remedial investigation (RI) objective of defining nature and extent of contamination. Once the NYSDEC considers nature and extent sufficiently well known, Taconic will be directed to begin a feasibility study (FS) to evaluate potential technologies for cleanup of the site-related contamination. NYSDEC will analyze the RI/FS results to determine the appropriate remedial action(s) and make a recommendation in the proposed remedial action plan (PRAP).

### PROJECT CONTACTS

#### Department of Environmental Conservation

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

**Barbara Firebaugh**, Project Manager  
(518) 402-9718 | [barbara.firebaugh@dec.ny.gov](mailto:barbara.firebaugh@dec.ny.gov)

#### For questions related to air emissions, emissions controls, and to report potential air permit violations:

Cameron Ross, Division of Air Project Manager  
(518) 357-2350 | [cameron.ross@dec.ny.gov](mailto:cameron.ross@dec.ny.gov)

#### To determine if your property is eligible for sampling, contact

the DEC Call Center (24/7) at 1-888-459-8667  
For questions related to the provision of an alternate water supply (i.e., bottled water, POET systems, or public water supply connections):

**David Chiusano**, Project Manager  
(518) 402-9813 | [David.Chiusano@dec.ny.gov](mailto:David.Chiusano@dec.ny.gov)

#### Department of Health

For health-related questions:

**Angela Martin**, Project Manager  
(518) 473-4671 | [bee@health.ny.gov](mailto:bee@health.ny.gov)

**Sign up to receive updates by email:**  
[www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html)

### RESOURCES

#### NYSDEC Petersburg Webpage

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

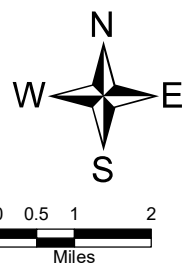
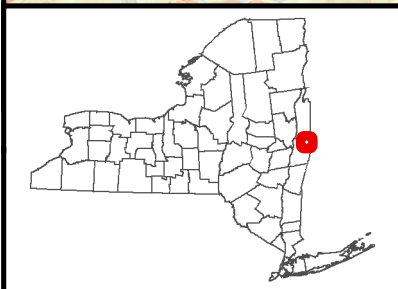
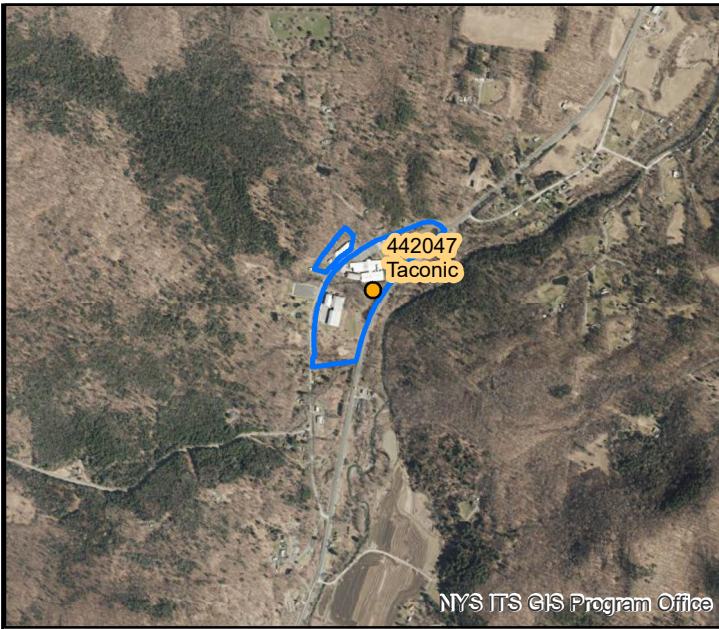
#### NYSDOH PFAS Webpage

- [https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/chemicals/chemicals\\_and\\_health/](https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/chemicals/chemicals_and_health/)

#### Sign up to receive updates by email:

- [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html)





**Figure 1**  
**Site Location Map**  
Taconic Plastics  
Town of Petersburg  
Rensselaer County  
Site No. 442047



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