

Do you know what is in your drinking water?



*.....keeping watch on
the industry*

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Citizen Participation with County Involvement in Wisconsin takes Time and Leadership!

In 2019, the Town of Wheaton, Chippewa County WI., conducted a survey of its residents so that a comprehensive planning "road map" could be developed for the next twenty years for the benefit of those folks and future generations.

The town of Wheaton has historically been a rural township. It borders two cities and has major transportation routes which run through the township. This unique configuration brings growth in residential developments along with commercial and industrial opportunities.

In this survey, residents were asked how they rated the importance of protecting and preserving their natural resources in the Town of Wheaton. Of the 568 people responding to a question about the importance of groundwater to their future, 92% of the respondents were strongly in favor of clean water.

The Wheaton Plan Commission and Wheaton Town Board worked in conjunction with Chippewa County Land Conservation and Forest Management Department to encourage residents to test their water for nitrates. With financial assistance from the County and the Town Board, and a small personal contribution, residents were able to get their water tested for nitrates. The University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point through their Water and Environmental and Analysis Lab offered their technical assistance, also. Additional fees were added if residents decided to add additional tests.

Previous data show Wheaton wells have tested nitrate levels from -0.10 to greater than 20 milligrams per liter. Groundwater contamination potential is influenced by soil characteristics, chemistry, fertilizers, septic systems, animal waste, and decaying plant debris. Currently nitrate levels at 10 milligrams per liter or higher are unsafe per the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and many locations in Chippewa County have concentrations more than this amount.

To bring awareness to the townspeople that water kits would be available, information was posted on the town website, presented at town board meetings and written in the minutes of the various committees to apprise everyone that kits would be available to them for residents to use. In addition, information was posted at the recycling center and the fire station. Residents were also mailed information through a direct mailing. On Saturday, April 9, 2022, interested Town of Wheaton residents came to the town hall to map out their well location and pick up a water testing kit. There were over 50 water kits given to residents. People came in from all directions of the township, and residents could choose the testing selections they desired.

The Town and the County personnel learned about a number of residents who already have reverse osmosis systems and water filtration systems in order to provide safe water for their homes.

Many thanks go to the administrative assistant staff at the Chippewa County Land Conservation and Forest Management Department, the experts from the Center for Watershed Science and Education at UW-Stevens Point, and the strong support of the Wheaton Town Board members for their assistance in carrying out this critical work that is important to the health and safety of the residents in Wheaton Township.

**Carolyn Kaiser, Secretary
Wheaton Plan Commission**

NOTE: Other towns in the state of Wisconsin might find it of interest to also carry out some investigative work on water quality.

At the monthly meeting of the Chippewa County Land Conservation and Forest Management Committee Meeting to be held on Wed. May 18, 2022, in RM 302, one of the items on the agenda is a presentation giving an overview of Chippewa County's Groundwater Data by Kevin Masarik, Groundwater Education Specialist with UW - Extension in the College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. Past groundwater sampling events, update on current contracted studies, and a demonstration on the online well monitoring data site for Chippewa County will be shared. Mark this date on your calendar so you can attend. Wear a mask if you would like, and feel free to comment during the opening session on this or other information. It is quite important that those living around frac sand mines have their water tested for any heavy metals or chemicals that might have moved into the drinking well sites or aquifers from mines or adjoining facilities.

Citizen action is critical to creating a clean environment for everyone!

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Welcome to the Frac Sand Sentinel, a newsletter highlighting resource links, news media accounts, blog posts, correspondence, observations and opinions gathered regarding local actions on, and impacts of, the developing frac sand mining and processing industries.

The content of this newsletter is for informational purposes only. The editor of the Frac Sand Sentinel does not accept any responsibility or liability for the use or misuse of the content of this newsletter or reliance by any persons on the newsletter's contents.

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE: wisair.wordpress.com and for additional information, [click here](#) for panoramic aerial views of frac sand mines, processing plants, and trans-load facilities. FracTracker.org is also an excellent source of information and a picture source.