

RESOLUTION
Adopted October 10, 2019

Related to the Public Health Risk from Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and Regional Action to Bolster Collaboration

Whereas, all Great Lakes residents deserve access to safe drinking water and clean natural resources; and

Whereas, millions of Great Lakes residents rely on public water systems that draw from surface and ground water, and private wells for access to safe, clean drinking water; and

Whereas, PFAS represent a class of thousands of human-made chemicals which are not naturally found in the environment, easily transfer through soil to groundwater, persist indefinitely, and have been shown to be harmful to human health; and

Whereas, PFAS have been detected throughout the Great Lakes Region including in the drinking, ground, and surface water and the tissue and blood of fish and wildlife; and

Whereas, nationwide studies show measurable levels of PFAS in 98 percent of the US population; and

Whereas, exposure to certain PFAS in the environment can lead to adverse human health effects including thyroid disease, decreased fertility, complications in pregnancy, low birth weights, decreased immune response, increased cholesterol, and cancer; and

Whereas, the absence of federal enforceable regulatory standards, including drinking water standards relating to PFAS contamination demands an immediate, proactive, and unified response from the executive, state agencies, and the legislature to protect public health and state natural resources; and

Whereas, a collaborative approach is needed to assess potential hazards, share data, identify best practices, establish uniform enforceable standards, and leverage funding sources.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission calls for the member states and provinces to bolster intra- and interstate collaboration and partnership to address the emerging risks posed by PFAS, by taking action to accomplish the following:

- I. Foster collaboration with municipalities and wastewater treatment plants on screening programs to identify potential sources of PFAS into the environment;
- II. Expand monitoring and consideration of PFAS in the development of fish and other wildlife consumption advisories to protect human health;
- III. Explore regulatory standards that are developed to protect public health and the environment from PFAS contamination;
- IV. Discuss mechanisms to effectively inform, educate, and engage the public about PFAS;

- V. Collaborate regionally to identify and prioritize likely known PFAS sources and incorporate this information into the PFAS action plan;
- VI. Support ongoing evaluation of public health risks of PFAS in addition to any impacts to the Great Lakes natural resources, agriculture, wildlife, and fisheries;
- VII. Promote the developments best practices and protocols for identifying PFAS sources to ensure that the materials are managed in a way that protects natural resources and human health.
- VIII. Encourage partnership with stakeholders, develop standard testing and treatment protocols that are both cost-efficient and effective;
- IX. Engage academic institutions and experts to identify and collaborate on joint projects, and further identify technical resources necessary to implement a PFAS action plan;
- X. Explore avenues of funding for the regional entities, state and provincial governments, local governments, and private parties to aid their effort to address PFAS.

Be it Further Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission urges the United States Environmental Protection Agency to expeditiously implement their PFAS Action Plan and engage in binational collaboration with Environment and Climate Change Canada and Canadian Provinces to include them in their efforts to share information and build stronger partnership on this issue; and

Be It Finally Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission calls on the federal governments of the United States and Canada to expedite risk communications, site assessments, remediation, treatment and prevention of PFAS contamination, and assume costs associated with these efforts for contamination that arises on and from federal properties.