

5/31/2023

Senator Eric Wimberger  
Room 104 South  
State Capitol  
PO Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Senator Wimberger,

I am reaching out to inform you of some important developments regarding the PFAS and PFOS water quality issues.

We believe that your work on SB 312 is a great first step in addressing Wisconsin's looming crisis of PFAS contamination in wells.

We urge you to ensure that schools and small entities on wells are covered in the bill. The owners of those wells need access to any funding that SB 312 would provide. We also urge you to prioritize small water systems and private landowners in the grants.

Here's why:

As you may know, the Wisconsin Council of Religious and Independent Schools (WCRIS) represents 600 private schools and over 120,000 students in K-12 schools across the state. We share your interest in ensuring that people have access to clean drinking water, free from PFAS contamination.

WCRIS has been involved with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and its efforts in creating a new water standard for PFAS. For the past year, WCRIS served as a small entity on the many round table discussions with other national water advocacy groups. We attended on behalf of our national association, The Council for American Private Education (CAPE).

Many rural schools that use private wells are considered public water systems. This is why CAPE (and therefore WCRIS) was invited to the table to discuss the proposed changes from the EPA.

As you may have seen this week, the EPA published a letter to the Administrator of the EPA addressing some of the important issues that many of the advocacy

Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Association of Christian  
Schools International

Christian Schools  
International

Diocese of Green Bay

Diocese of LaCrosse

Diocese of Madison

Diocese of Superior

Lutheran Church  
Missouri Synod  
North Wisconsin District

Lutheran Church  
Missouri Synod  
South Wisconsin District

Wisconsin Association  
of Independent Schools

Wisconsin Conference  
of Seventh Day Adventists

Wisconsin Evangelical  
Lutheran Synod  
Northern Wisconsin District

Wisconsin Evangelical  
Lutheran Synod  
Western Wisconsin District

Wisconsin Evangelical  
Lutheran Synod  
Southeastern Wisconsin  
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groups have raised. The letter is attached for your convenience. You'll note it explicitly recognizes Wisconsin, thanks to WCRIS.

The EPA has come to the conclusion that there is not enough adequate funding to meet the compliance standards that the department seeks to achieve. The letter also talks about the oversight limitations of small public water systems and utility companies in the areas of funding and training.

Therefore, proposed SB 312 is a worthy effort for Wisconsin. Again, to be most effective, it needs to address the needs of small public water systems like private schools.

Thank you for your time and consideration as we tackle water quality issues. If you have any future questions, please contact Daniel Henderson in our office who has been monitoring the PFAS water issues with EPA for some time now, or independent contract lobbyist Matt Kussow, who is handling some legislative relations for us this session.

Please reach out to any of us if we can be of further assistance.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon L. Schmeling". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Sharon Schmeling  
Executive Director

Attachments:

*EPA's PFAS National Primary Drinking Water Regulation Rulemaking, May 2023*