



TOWN OF QUEENSBURY

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Town of Queensbury Update on Jenkinstown Area Environmental Assessment May 2021

The Queensbury Town Board is working with community residents and New York State agencies to address environmental conditions in the Jenkinstown area. The Town Board has set the following goals:

- First and foremost, to protect the health of our residents and the environment;
- To try to help put into place a safe, reliable, long-term drinking water solution as quickly as is practically possible;
- To ensure that a comprehensive assessment of the environmental conditions in the area is conducted, that sufficient and reliable data are collected and analyzed, and that our community has confidence in any decisions that may result, and
- To provide factual information to our community and ample, opportunities for our residents to have their questions answered

The Facts on the Jenkinstown Area Assessment

- New York State adopted new drinking water standards that contained maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for the chemicals PFOA and PFOS and 1,4-Dioxane on August 26, 2020. The MCLs are 10 parts per trillion for PFOA and PFAS and 1 part per billion for 1,4-Dioxane. They are among the most protective standards for public water in any state.
- The state Department of Health (DOH) said it has collected samples from 80 residential drinking water wells in the Jenkinstown area and to date results have been received on 77 wells.
- No PFOA or PFOS above the New York State Public Drinking Water standard was detected in any of the 77 wells.
- The presence of 1,4-dioxane was detected at, near or above the New York State Drinking Water standard in 18 wells.
- DEC has provided bottled water to the 18 residences where 1,4-dioxane levels were detected at, near or above the drinking water standard.

- The state agencies have determined no further action is necessary on 50 of the wells it sampled. Nine wells have been identified for resampling.

What are the potential health risks?

- DOH has said “the highest levels (of 1,4-dioxane) detected to date in the Jenkinsville areas do not pose a significant health risk and are well below the levels of 1,4-dioxane associated with health effects.” (*DEC Jenkinsville Assessment Community Update, April 2021*).
- To protect public health, New York State routinely sets a drinking water standard with a maximum contaminant level (commonly referred to as the MCL) at a concentration “well below” that which is associated with health effects in laboratory animal studies and “with a large measure of protection” for human beings. (*Public Water Systems and New York State Drinking Water Standards for PFOA, PFOS and 1,4-Dioxane, New York State Department of Health*.)
- Nevertheless, because DOH routinely advises people to reduce exposure when drinking water standards are exceeded, DEC is providing bottled water to the residences at no charge.
- As for using water for showering, washing dishes or in a humidifier from wells where 1,4-dioxane was detected, DOH said these activities likely involve only minimal exposure and no significant risk.
- For gardening, DOH said that research shows the amount of 1,4-dioxane taken up by plants is limited. Based on sampling to date, the amount of 1,4-dioxane exposure that a gardener may experience watering gardens and consuming produce grown in those gardens would be minimal, DOH said. However, the agency advises gardeners to wash their hands after contact with soil from any location and to follow healthy gardening practices.

How did this start?

- The New York State Legislature directed DEC to undertake a statewide effort to investigate old landfills and other inactive solid waste sites to determine if emerging contaminants are affecting drinking water supplies. The focus is on “emerging contaminants,” that include PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl) and 1,4-dioxane.
- The Town of Queensbury owns an inactive, former municipal solid waste landfill near Ridge Road and Route 149 in the Town of Queensbury. The landfill was capped and closed under a DEC-approved plan. The former Town landfill is one of four landfills in close proximity in the immediate area.

- The five monitoring wells at the former Town landfill were sampled by DEC in January 2020. PFOA and 1,4-dioxane were detected in these groundwater wells. (These wells are used to monitor environmental conditions near the landfill. They are not drinking water wells.) DEC reported that the highest concentration of PFOA was 210 parts per trillion. It said the highest concentration of 1,4-dioxane was 6 parts per billion.
- The source of the 1,4-dioxane has not been identified. Having sampled the former Queensbury Town Landfill, DEC is now sampling the monitoring wells at the three other landfills in the immediate area: the former Ciba-Geigy landfill now owned by BASF; the former Finch Paper landfill, and a construction/demolition debris landfill formerly known as the McLoughlin landfill and now owned by Warren County.

Next Steps

- The Town Board has engaged C.T. Male Associates to update a 1990 study into the feasibility of extending the existing Town of Queensbury public water supply to properties near the landfills. C.T. Male has also recommended assessing a potential groundwater source for public water upgradient of the landfills.
- The State has asked the Town whether it wishes to enter into a consent order under which the Town would conduct site characterization with State approval and under State oversight. The Town Board is considering this question and consulting its legal and technical advisers to assess whether the Town can be proactively involved on behalf of its residents even if DEC takes the lead on the site characterization.
- Two public meetings have been scheduled to discuss these issues. The Town Board will discuss the town's potential role in the environmental assessment at the Town Board meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, May 17, 2021. The public is invited to attend. The Town Board will invite community input at the Town Board meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, June 7, 2021.
- The Town Board also is inviting public comments. They can be sent to Supervisor Strough and the Town Board at johns@queensbury.net or mailed to the Queensbury Town Hall, 742 Bay Road, Queensbury, N.Y. 12804.

Staying Up to Date

The Town of Queensbury will update this fact sheet as events warrant, provide it by email to individuals on its mailing list, and post it on its web site at queensbury.net. You can join the mailing list by contacting Supervisor John Strough at johns@queensbury.net, by calling the supervisor's office at 518-761-8229, or by sending an email to QueensburyProject@behancom.com

Members of the Town Board also welcome your questions:

- Anthony Metivier, Councilman Ward 1 (includes Jenkinsville area) Ward1@queensbury.net
- Harrison Freer, Councilman Ward 2, | @hfreer@queensbury.net
- George Ferone, Councilman Ward 3, | georgef@queensbury.net
- Tim McNulty, Councilman Ward 4, Timothym@queensbury.net

You can also sign up for updates from DEC by visiting www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html. The DEC and DOH staff working on this matter are available to answer your questions:

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