



TOWN OF QUEENSBURY

742 Bay Road, Queensbury, NY. 12804-5902

Town of Queensbury Update on Jenkinsville Area Environmental Assessment June 2021

This Report to the Community provides an update on new developments since the first report was issued in May 2021.

The Queensbury Town Board is working with community residents and New York State agencies to address environmental conditions in the Jenkinsville 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.

Most Recent Developments:

- The Queensbury Town Board voted unanimously on June 7, 2021, to consent to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) undertaking the site characterization, remedial investigation and feasibility study of the area of and near the Queensbury Landfill.
- The Department of Environmental Conservation has advised the Town of Queensbury that DEC and DOH are expanding the private well sampling effort in the vicinity of the Queensbury Landfill from a half-mile radius to a one-mile radius downgradient of the landfill. DEC and DOH will offer sampling to 35 additional private well owners in the expanded area.

The Facts on the Jenkinsville Area Assessment

- To protect public health, New York State adopted new drinking water standards, or maximum contaminant levels (MCLs), for the chemicals PFOA, PFOS and 1,4-dioxane on August 26, 2020. The MCLs are 10 parts per trillion (ppt) each for PFOA and PFOS, and 1 part per billion (ppb) for 1,4-dioxane. They are among the most protective standards for public water in any state.
- New York State sets drinking water standards with MCLs at concentrations well below those that are 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.*)

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- The DEC and Department of Health (DOH) collected samples from 81 residential drinking water wells in the Jenkinville area and to date results have been received on 80 wells.
- Neither PFOA nor PFOS were detected above the New York State MCL in any of the 80 wells.
- 1,4-Dioxane was detected at, near, or above the New York State MCL in 19 wells.
- DEC has provided bottled water to 19 residences where 1,4-dioxane levels were detected at, near, or above the MCL.
- The state agencies determined no further action is necessary on more than 50 of the wells that were sampled. Nine wells have been identified for resampling.
- DEC also sampled wells serving the public restrooms and soccer building at the Town-owned Jenkinville Park. DEC reported that 1,4-dioxane was detected in the restroom sample but at a level well below the MCL. 1,4-Dioxane was not detected in the well serving the soccer building. One irrigation well at Jenkinville Park also was sampled. 1,4-Dioxane was detected but at a level well below the respective MCL. DEC reported that 1,4-dioxane was detected at the 1.0 ppb MCL in a well serving the maintenance shop. The well is not used for drinking water and is not accessible to the public. The staff has relied on bottled water for about 20 years. DOH recommended additional testing for the well serving the maintenance shop.

What are the potential health risks?

- DOH has said “the highest levels (of 1,4-dioxane) detected to date in the Jenkinville areas do not pose a significant health risk and are well below the levels of 1,4-dioxane associated with health effects.” (*DEC Jenkinville Assessment Community Update, April 2021*).
- 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.

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How did this start?

- DEC is undertaking 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 substances) 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. Results were provided to the town in August 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 ppt and the highest concentration of 1,4-dioxane was 6 ppb.
- The source of the 1,4-dioxane has not been identified. Having sampled the former Queensbury Town Landfill, DEC sampled monitoring wells at the three other landfills in the immediate area: the former Finch Paper landfill, the BASF/Ciba Geigy landfill and a construction/demolition debris landfill formerly known as the McLaughlin landfill and now owned by Warren County.
- While 1,4-dioxane was detected in 4 of 5 monitoring wells at the Finch landfill, the detections were at levels well below the MCL of 1.0 ppb. PFOA and PFOS compounds also were detected, but again below their respective MCL. At the Ciba Geigy/BASF landfill, there were no detections of 1,4-Dioxane above the MCL and only one detection of PFAS above its MCL. Sampling of the McLaughlin Landfill has taken place and the DEC is awaiting those results.

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.



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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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