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**MDHHS releases North Kent County PFAS study results;
announces additional studies in West Michigan**
Two webinars on report findings offered Sept. 16

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has released its first findings of the North Kent County Exposure Assessment (NKCEA), a public health investigation to learn about per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) levels in the blood of people drinking water from private drinking water wells in North Kent County.

In 2016, PFAS were found in some residential drinking water wells in certain areas of northern Kent County. Many of these wells had PFAS levels above the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Lifetime Health Advisory of 70 parts per trillion (ppt). Households located north of Grand Rapids with private drinking water wells were eligible for the study if their wells had documented and measured PFAS levels. Clinics were held from November 2018 to June 2019 to measure PFAS levels in people's blood.

The investigation found NKCEA participants' PFAS serum levels varied by type of PFAS and ranged from low levels similar to those found in many people of the U.S. to high levels that exceeded what is commonly found in most people in the U.S.

"These findings suggest the need for continued public health action in the North Kent County area to investigate PFAS exposures and resulting long-term health effects," said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, chief medical executive and chief deputy for health. "The assessment team continues to analyze data, including questionnaires and drinking water samples from study participants."

MDHHS and Kent County Health Department (KCHD) representatives are presenting the [preliminary report](#) and answering community questions during webinars on Wednesday, Sept. 16, 12 -1:30 p.m. and 6:30 – 8 p.m. Interested individuals can [register for the meeting online](#) or by calling 844-464-7327 at least one day before the meeting. [A summary of the report](#) is also available online.

This report describes the NKCEA participant demographics and summarizes blood levels of PFAS for participants 12 and older. Additional reports that look at all ages and the relationship between PFAS in water and blood will be released in the future.

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While NKCEA information is still being analyzed, MDHHS is actively planning other studies to look at health outcomes that may be linked to high PFAS levels found in Michigan communities. Upcoming research will be conducted in the Belmont/Rockford area in northern Kent County and two locations near Kalamazoo - Cooper Township and the City of Parchment.

Residents will be asked to participate in two MDHHS studies: Michigan PFAS Exposure and Health Study (MiPEHS) and a multi-site study coordinated in partnership between MDHHS and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). MiPEHS is a long-term study that will follow participants for approximately five years to measure their PFAS exposure, health history and levels of health markers, such as cholesterol, hormones and glucose.

Residents in these communities are also encouraged to take part in the Multi-Site Health Study, a multi-site study coordinated in partnership with ATSDR and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The multi-site study will examine the human health effects of exposures to PFAS in drinking water at locations around the U.S.

For questions about NKCEA or to request a paper copy of the report, call the MDHHS exposure assessment team at 844-464-7327.

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