
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 29, 2018

KCHD and MDHHS issue Health Advisory regarding PFAS Foam on the Thornapple River

Grand Rapids – Out of an abundance of caution, the Kent County Health Department (KCHD) and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) are recommending that people using the Thornapple River avoid swallowing foam floating on the water.

This advisory is being issued after the MDHHS and KCHD received test results from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality on June 29, 2018. Samples taken immediately downstream of the Cascade Dam on June 6, 2018 reveal total PFAS amounts of 316.97 parts per trillion (ppt) with PFOA at 2.41 ppt and PFOS at 197 ppt.

Because of these high levels of PFAS, MDHHS and KCHD have concluded that swallowing the foam may pose a human health risk. Therefore, the two agencies are advising people to take precautions against swallowing the foam while using the river recreationally.

Current science suggests PFAS do not easily enter through the skin and would not pose a risk to human health.

More information about the results can be found [here](#).

Residents who have health questions for MDHHS can call (800) 648-6742.

Residents who have questions about the environmental investigation can contact MDEQ at (800) 662-9278.

Reporters who have questions about the test results can contact MDEQ (517) 284-9278.

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KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 265 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.

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