

# **PFAS Task Force Chair Report**

## **August 2021**

### **Background**

The Town of Londonderry and its residents began to see increasing levels of PFAS in their wells (drinking water) in the last few years. The NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) helped to identify a major source to be exhaust emissions from the Saint Gobain manufacturing process in Merrimack, NH. The prevailing wind west-to-east likely delivered particles to Londonderry which eventually filtered down into the drinking water in the ground. A court order (consent decree) between DES and Saint Gobain identified the area for which Saint Gobain is responsible both regard to testing and PFAS mitigation (“Consent Decree Area”).

### **Londonderry Response: Creation of PFAS Community Task Force**

On February 1, 2021, the Londonderry Town Council adopted Resolution 2021-03 (as amended by Resolution 2021-04 on March 1, 2021) to establish a Community Task Force (“Task Force”) to investigate and recommend an appropriate response. The Resolutions may be found as an attachment in Appendix A. The organization of the Task Force consisted of one Town Councilor (Tom Dolan) as Chairman and one member of town staff (Bob Kerry, Environmental Engineer) as Vice Chair. The remaining Task Force members (and Londonderry residents) were selected through an interview process with the Town Council and are as follows: Jim Doucakis, Craig Durrett, Anne Fenn, Thomas Garside, George Kadziolka, Paul Lockwood, Richard Lombard, and David Robinson.

### **Initial Work of the Task Force**

The Task Force members met for several information sessions both among themselves and with DES. The Task Force members were then organized into three “teams” to address three goals: (1) better understand the PFAS standards and identify well water testing resources; (2) identify PFAS contamination mitigation resources; and (3) mount communication efforts with Londonderry residents about PFAS contamination in general, and testing/mitigation resources specifically. Efforts initiated by the Task Force to communicate with DES aided an already productive working relationship with multiple members of NHDES and Town Staff. This resulted in a coordinated ongoing effort to rapidly transfer and explain a tremendous quantity of very useful information related to all three of the Task Force’s goals. With regard to each goal, the Task Force accomplished the following:

Well Testing/DES standards: Information gleaned specific to the “Well Testing/DES standards” goal included:

- The rationale for the PFAS standards adopted in NH
- Understanding the Consent Decree area vs. remainder of Town
- Well testing procedures specific to each area

- Toxicology of PFAS
- Perspective of PFAS vs. naturally occurring contaminants
- Presence of well water testing vendors at the 6-17-21 Vendor Fair
- Presence of 3 knowledgeable NHDES staff members at the 6-17-21 Vendor Fair

Remediation: Information from the coordinated ongoing information transfer with DES specific to “Remediation” included:

- Understanding Consent Decree area vs. remainder of Town
- Remediation options and approaches specific to each area
- Understanding of “Community” public water systems and available financial assistance programs available to them
- Availability of funding assistance programs to assist individual drinking water well owners outside of the Consent Decree Area
- Assistance to Town staff in applying for and obtaining grant funding for assistance
- DES-led feasibility study of long term PFAS remediation strategies for areas outside of Consent Decree Area

Public Education: Information from the coordinated ongoing information transfer with the DES specific to “Public Education” included:

- Enabling designated Town staff members to, in a timely manner, accurately answer concerned residents’ PFAS related questions
- A 5-20-21 live NHDES webinar presentation of the “Well Testing/ DES standards” and “Remediation” topics listed above, with Live Q&A session
- The 6-17-21 Vendor Fair (including DES staff members) at the LHS cafeteria to present the “Well Testing/ DES standards” and “Remediation” topics listed above
- Enabling the Town to continually post updated and accurate PFAS specific information on a dedicated PFAS topic page on the Town’s web page.

## **Workshop**

As perhaps the culmination of its work, the Task Force decided to conduct a workshop to provide a forum for interested residents to meet in person with local testing vendors and mitigation vendors. Accordingly, the PFAS Vendor Fair was held in the Londonderry High School Café on June 17, 2021 from 6-8PM. Additionally, DES attended the workshop to provide answers to resident questions as well as toxicology expertise. The vendors in attendance were as follows: Second Wind Water Systems, Culligan, The Water Techs, Skillings, Dan Davis Sales, Stonehill Environmental and New Hampshire Water Care. The Vendor Fair was well-attended and lauded by attendees as being helpful and informative.

## **Financial Impacts**

Those Londonderry residents who live outside the Consent Decree Area are responsible for testing their own wells and mitigating any contamination levels in their own judgment.

Londonderry plans to implement some level of cost sharing/rebate of mitigation expenses. The level of financial support will be determined in accordance with monies made available by state/federal sources as determined by a process created by the Town Manager and approved by the Town Council. Town staff should evaluate whether the PFAS Task Force may be utilized in the screening/evaluation process for resident reimbursement under a rebate program, or whether such tasks must be handled by Town staff, including the Finance Department.

Those residents who live within the Consent Decree Area will be provided with mitigation solutions provided by Saint Gobain per the applicable Consent Decree.

### **Future Actions**

The Task Force has been successful in accomplishing its 3 objectives. Without their help, we wouldn't be where we are today. I would also note that the town administration, legal, and engineering staff have also been busy working behind the scenes to get to where we are today.

#### **Additional Recommendations for the Future:**

1. Offer a nonbinding referendum to Londonderry citizens in March 2022 to see if the town wants the Town Council to pursue in several steps the capitalization of a town wide water system over some several years. At the time of this report the Town Solicitor is developing the proper language of the Warrant Article for the Town Council to consider.
2. Alternatively, an additional approach may be to see if the Town residents would be willing to finance select water line extensions over time.
3. Another approach to consider may be to finance a method to accelerate a feasibility study for long term remediation strategies.
4. The Town Manager should consider adding a technical staff member or employing the services of an expert consulting firm with water pollution technical credentials to monitor town status/response to drinking water contaminations and to assist the Town with long-term planning in this area.

## **Appendix A**

Resolution 2021-03

## RESOLUTION 2021-03

A Resolution Relative to Creation of the  
***PFAS Task Force***

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First Reading: 02/01/21  
Second Reading: Not required  
Adopted: 02/01/21

***WHEREAS*** the Londonderry Town Council recognizes the rising concerns in Londonderry related to PFAS-related contamination in drinking water; and


***WHEREAS*** the Londonderry Town Council and Town staff have engaged in discussions with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (“NHDES”) related to the extent of PFAS-related contamination, and potential remediation and mitigation measures for, such contamination in Londonderry and the NHDES has presented to the Council a framework for addressing such matters; and

***WHEREAS*** the Town Council would like to create a community PFAS Task Force to, with the assistance of NHDES, do the following: (1) identify a plan for water sampling to better assess the extent of PFAS-related contamination in the Town of Londonderry; (2) identify, study and make recommendations as to potential remediation and mitigation measures related to PFAS-related contamination; and (3) assist the Council and Town staff with informing and educating residents on the sampling, extent of contamination, and potential remediation and mitigation measures as necessary.

***NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED*** by the Londonderry Town Council that the PFAS Task Force be established in accordance with the “Committee Charge”, a copy of which is attached hereto.



John Farrell, Chairman  
Town Council

  
Sharon Farrell  
Town Clerk

***A TRUE COPY ATTEST:***



**LONDONDERRY PFAS TASK FORCE  
“COMMITTEE CHARGE”**

**PURPOSE:**

The PFAS Task Force (“Task Force”) shall exist to, with the assistance of NHDES, do the following:

- (1) identify a plan for water sampling to better assess the extent of PFAS-related contamination in the Town of Londonderry;
- (2) identify, study and make recommendations as to potential remediation and mitigation measures related to PFAS-related contamination, including any potential funding sources; and
- (3) assist the Council and Town staff with informing and educating residents on the plan for sampling, extent of contamination, and potential remediation and mitigation measures as necessary.

**REPRESENTATION:**

The Task Force shall consist of the following:

- A member of the Town Council, who shall act as the Chair of the Task Force; and
- A staff member, who shall act as Vice Chair but a non-voting member of the Task Force;
- Three (3) members, to be appointed by the Council, who are residents of Londonderry and who, by occupation or training, are environmental or chemical engineers or have a background in environmental science, toxicology, hydrogeology, etc.; AND
- Three (3) members, to be appointed by the Council, who are resident “at-large” members, with each living in geographically varied locations in the Town (i.e., one from the Matthew Thornton elementary district; one from the North School district; and one from the South School district). It is preferable that such members also have a background in engineering, science or public health.

Staff members of the Planning Department, Department of Public Works & Engineering, and the Town Manger’s office shall provide administrative and technical support to the Task Force as necessary.

**ORGANIZATION:**

The Task Force shall determine its own rules or order of business, unless otherwise provided by law or Town Charter.

In addition to the Town Council member who shall act as Chair and the DPW staff member who shall serve as Vice Chair (non-voting), the Task Force shall appoint a Secretary.

**DUTIES / RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Hold meetings and keep minutes of any such meeting in accordance with RSA Chapter 91-A.
2. Provide periodic reports to the Town Council, with the first report on or around April 15, 2021.
3. Maintain a permanent project file that, at a minimum, includes:
  - A. Committee minutes;
  - B. Project plans, contracts and payment requests;
  - C. Project correspondence; and
  - D. Other material as deemed necessary.
4. Provide a final report to the Council, or request an extension of such final report deadline, on or about June 30, 2021.