



Route 31 and Rymon Road Area Drinking Water

Margaret Gregor, US EPA On-Scene Coordinator

December 10, 2024 Community Meeting



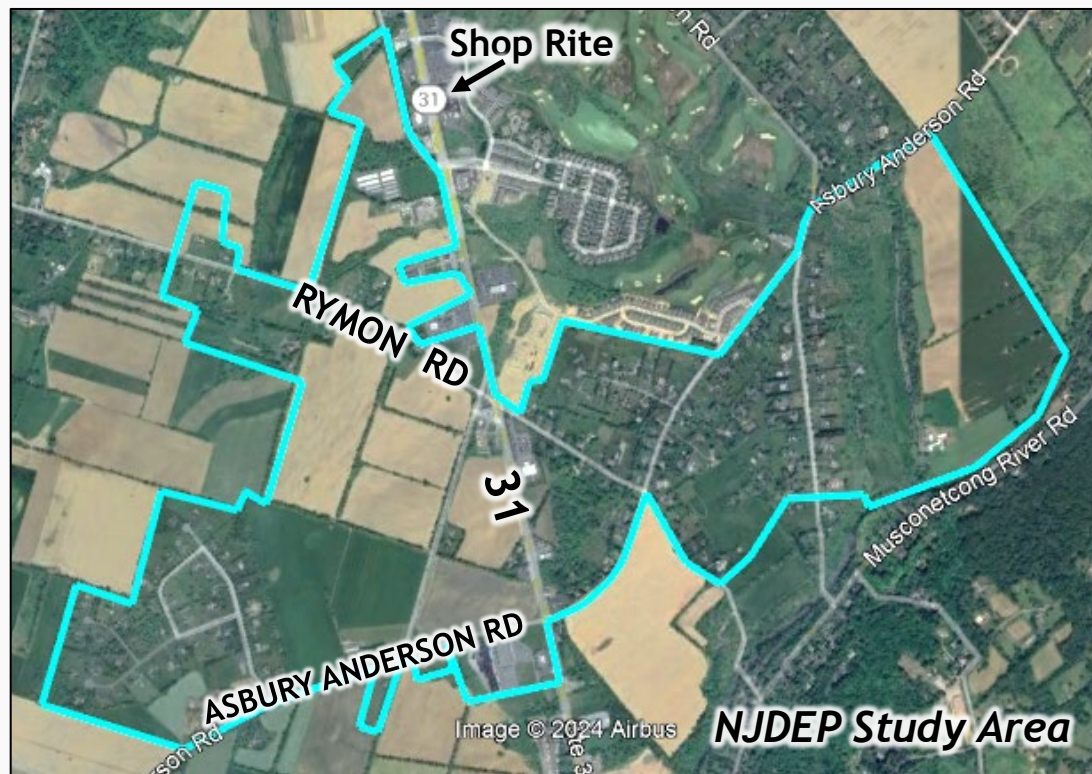
AGENDA

- Introductions
- Why is EPA here now?
- About EPA's Superfund Program
- PFAS contamination background & history
- EPA's current & upcoming work
- Next steps
- Questions & answers



Why is the EPA here?

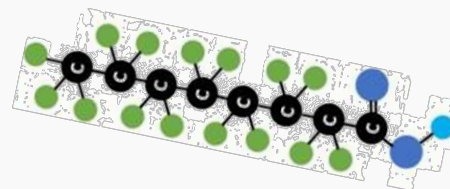
- Since 2020, NJDEP has been investigating PFAS contamination in drinking water in areas near Rymon Road & Rt. 31, following discovery of high-level PFAS during routine sampling in 2019
- As NJDEP's investigation expanded, they provided or paid for individual water treatment systems, and the township has been working to have a water line installed
- EPA is now taking the lead for investigating and cleaning up PFAS contamination from several industrial sources





Why is the EPA here?

- PFAS (**p**er- & **p**oly **f**luoro**a**klyl **s**ubstances), a.k.a. “forever chemicals,” are widely-used, long-lasting manmade chemicals which break down very slowly, typically used to repel oil & water
 - PFOA = perfluorooctanoic acid
 - PFOS = perfluorooctanesulfonic acid
- PFAS are newly studied “emerging contaminants” linked to harmful health effects
- EPA now has the full legal authority under the Superfund program to take action to protect people from certain PFAS from industrial sources, and recover costs





Why is the EPA here?

- NJDEP alerted EPA of the contamination, and following the *hazardous substance* designation of PFOA & PFOS under Superfund, formally transferred the investigation to EPA on November 7, 2024



- EPA's Superfund program gives EPA the tools to address complex, large areas of contamination



What is Superfund?

- Congress established the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) in 1980
- CERCLA is sometimes informally referred to as “Superfund”
- EPA’s Superfund program gives EPA the authority to clean up some of the nation’s most contaminated sites and to respond to environmental emergencies and natural disasters



Superfund Removal & Remedial Programs

- Superfund has two sub-programs under which EPA, or responsible parties, study and address polluted sites:
 - **Removal Program:** for short-term responses to mitigate the most immediate threats to people's health or the environment
 - **Remedial Program:** for complex sites needing long-term response and are placed on the National Priorities List (NPL)
- EPA will be investigating other media (soil, watershed impacts, etc.) and is evaluating this site for placement on the NPL



Site Background & History

- NJDEP's investigation: main PFAS source is thought to be sludge from a *historic textile facility* in Washington Borough, which was spread as fertilizer over 45+ acres of farmland
- **1946-1974:** Castle Creek Fabrics & Northern Dyeing Corp. cloth dyeing, screen printing & fabric finishing
 - PFAS was a component of textile production chemicals/processes like those at this facility to impart water, oil & stain repellence/resistance

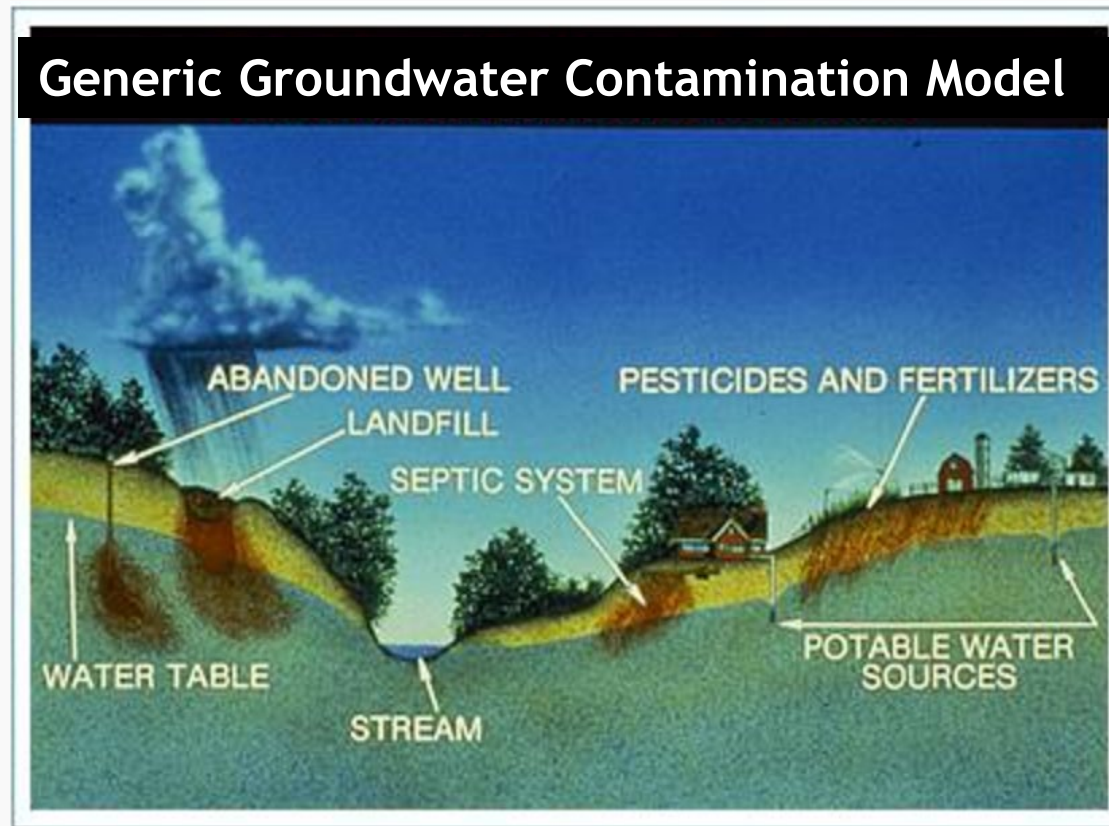


*Photo from
DuPont Magazine,
March-April 1965*

Automatic screen-printing machine produces 10 colors on fabric simultaneously by squeezing dyes with squeegee through screens of "Daeron". Resilient screens resist chemical damage.

Site Background & History

- Mid-1950s to mid-1970s: Castle Creek/Northern Dyeing reportedly discharged 300,000 gallons of wastewater per day + **12-14,000 gallons sludge per day, sprayed over farm fields & plowed in once dry**
- PFAS from sludge/soil seeped into the groundwater, and only now we're realizing its toxicity





EPA's Current Actions

1. Providing bottled water
 2. Sampling of entire initial study area
 3. Providing water treatment systems
- We're requesting your participation and permission to take these actions, via an access form



CONSENT FOR ACCESS TO PROPERTY

Property Owner(s): _____

Address of Property: _____

I _____, am the owner, or represent the owner, of the property listed above. I understand that the United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") is conducting work on my property pursuant to its responsibilities under the Superfund law, also known as the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, as amended, 42 U.S.C. §§ 9601-9675.

I consent to allow authorized representatives of EPA to enter the property to perform investigative and cleanup activities including, but not limited to: 1) collection of water samples, 2) provision of bottled water, 3) visual inspection of well equipment, 4) installation of a water treatment system, and 5) photographic documentation. I understand that such representatives may include contractors and/or subcontractors hired by EPA, other Federal and state agencies, and their agents. I also understand and agree that these representatives may access the property at reasonable times as mutually scheduled.

I understand the EPA is obligated to release to the public all analytical results of samples that EPA and its representatives collect or have collected on the property, if requested by any interested parties under the Freedom of Information Act.

I recognize that performance of such actions may require some disturbance to the property and EPA will minimize disturbance as much as possible. Areas of disturbance will be restored to as close to prior conditions as reasonably possible by EPA. I understand that EPA requires its contractors to maintain comprehensive vehicle liability insurance and comprehensive general liability insurance for bodily injury, death and loss or damage to property, arising from the activities of its contractors.

This written permission is given by me voluntarily and without any promises or assurances, sought or given, by the EPA. It is also given with the full understanding that I may revoke access at any time, with or without cause, and without any prior notification.

By my signature, I also acknowledge that I am fully authorized to grant such access.

Signature

Date

Printed Name and Title

Telephone Number

Preferred Contact Times

Email Address

Alternate Contact, Email Address & Phone:



Bottled Water: Why?

- EPA is providing immediate bottled water delivery for free where NJDEP's sampling results exceed EPA's standards
 - To 49 properties without an updated treatment system + *any new ones found* > EPA MCLs, **if access form is submitted**
 - Current studies show other exposures to PFAS (showering, dishes, laundry etc.) not significant compared to drinking & cooking
- EPA using its new, **more stringent** drinking water standards, the Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs), which NJ will adopt by 2027:

PFAS	NJDEP MCL	EPA MCL
PFOA	14	4
PFOS	13	4
PFNA	13	10

All levels in parts per trillion (ppt or ng/L)



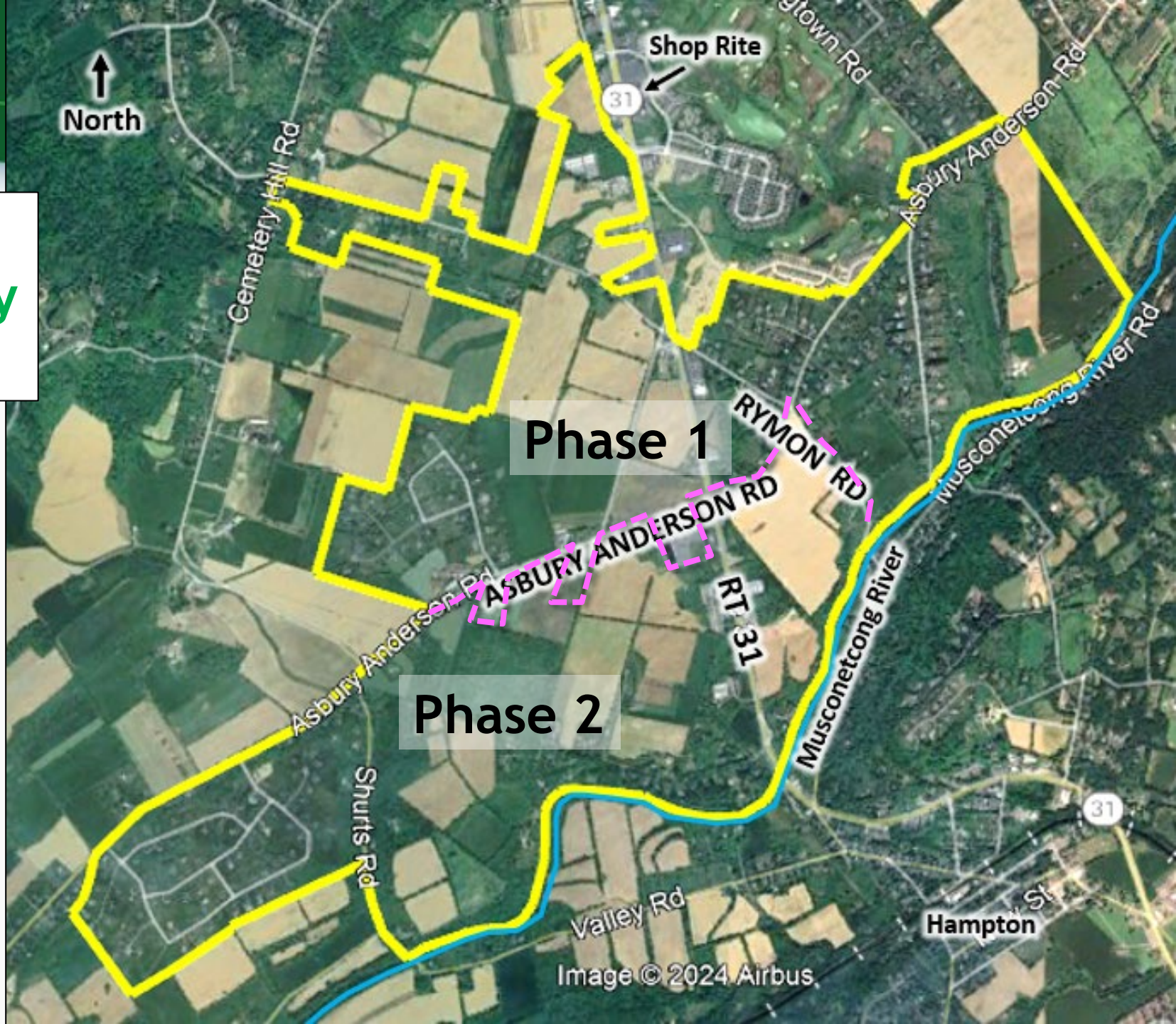
Drinking Water Sampling

- Free drinking water sampling in EPA's study area - even if your well has been sampled or has a treatment system
- Purposes:
 1. **Test for additional contaminants:** volatile & semi-volatile organic compounds, heavy metals, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
 2. **Confirm NJDEP data**
 3. **Define extent of contamination from industrial sources**
- You will get results about two months after the sampling



Send
Access
Form

EPA
Study
Area





Water Treatment Systems

- If your drinking water exceeds EPA's drinking water standards (MCLs), EPA will offer bottled water and then the installation, sampling, and maintenance of a **whole-building water treatment system** in the spring, at no cost, until a more permanent option is available
- **Access form is needed**



Typical Point-of-Entry Treatment (POET) system



EPA's Next Steps

- **The EPA will be in the area** and will try to reach study area occupants by phone, email and/or in person
- **Consistent updates**, as needed and at milestones
 - Fact sheets, updating our website, availability sessions, meetings, office hours etc. - all on EPA's website for the site
- **Sampling of Phase 2 drinking water in Spring**
 - We will contact you for sampling, but access forms welcome now
- **Sampling of other media**, including soil in source areas
 - Working with NJ Dept. of Agriculture on PFAS uptake by crops
- **EPA longer-term work**: evaluating site for NPL eligibility

response.epa.gov/Route31Sludge (link updated in January 2025)

https://www.washington-twp-warren.org/how_do_i/well_water_contamination.php



Key Points

- EPA taking lead role for investigation and cleanup of PFAS related to local industrial sources, to protect public health
- **Please submit your access form** for a water sampling appointment and bottled water + treatment system
 - Send to Gregor.Margaret@epa.gov, 908-421-2624 or snail mail
- The EPA will be in the community and will continue to keep you informed as the work progresses - we want to hear from you!



Thank you!

QUESTIONS?

Margaret Gregor, On-Scene Coordinator

2890 Woodbridge Ave., MS-211, Edison, NJ 08837 (for access forms)

Gregor.Margaret@epa.gov, 908-421-2624

Joel Waddell, Community Involvement Coordinator

Waddell.Joel@epa.gov, 929-656-3416

EPA Website

Updated Jan. 2025:



(Fact Sheet,
Access Form
& More)

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Resources for PFAS & Health

- EPA “PFAS Explained”
 - <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/pfas-explained>
- EPA Info on Treatment Technologies & Home Filters
 - <https://www.epa.gov/sciencematters/reducing-pfas-drinking-water-treatment-technologies>
- Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry (ATSDR) PFAS & Health
 - <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/index.html>
- NJDOH PFAS Fact Sheet
 - https://www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/documents/pfas_drinking%20water.pdf