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## Quality Water Matters

Brought to you by the City of Ann Arbor  
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First, I want to thank the many of you whom I spoke with at both the Mayor's Green Fair and at our pop-up water event at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market in June. At both of these events, Sarah Page, our drinking water quality manager, and I, spoke with dozens of City of Ann Arbor water customers about water quality. We continue to

be asked many great questions and have enjoyed the opportunity to both listen to and educate our customers. We intend to continue to be available at events throughout the summer, so please keep an eye out for us, and our water drop mascot, as we love hearing from you.

**This month, I want to share the city's three-pronged approach to addressing the 1,4-dioxane plume that has contaminated groundwater in the city.** As you may be aware, the City of Ann Arbor has intervened in the Attorney General for the State of Michigan vs. Gelman Sciences, Inc. case that is pending in the Michigan Circuit Court. The city's goal as part of this intervention is to accelerate their removal of contamination from the groundwater, remove any contaminants that continue to enter the groundwater, prevent migration of the 1,4-dioxane plume toward the Huron River and the city's water supply at Barton Pond, and improve understanding of both where the plume currently resides and where it is going. The city continues to actively engage in achieving these goals through the legal process.

Concurrent with participation in the litigation described above, the city is taking action to ensure Barton Pond remains protected from potential contamination from the Gelman plume. The city has hired a hydrogeologist to review all of the current groundwater and well log data and propose locations for additional monitoring wells called "sentinel wells." The purpose of these additional wells is to provide the city with early warning if the plume migrates toward Barton Pond. Detection of 1,4-dioxane in these proposed wells would help apply pressure on Gelman to accelerate the remediation process and allows the city sufficient time to install additional treatment at the city's water treatment plant if needed. We anticipate well placement recommendations to be completed by the end of this calendar year.

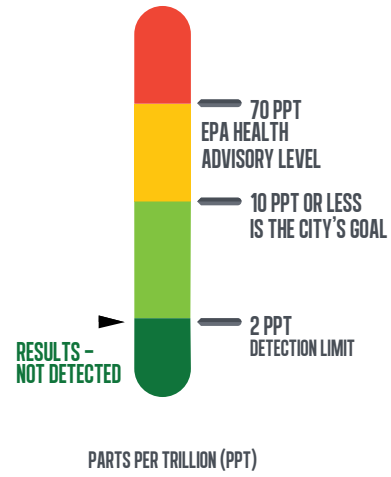
The third element at play is that several communities are considering petitioning Governor Whitmer to request that the Environmental Protection Agency assess adding

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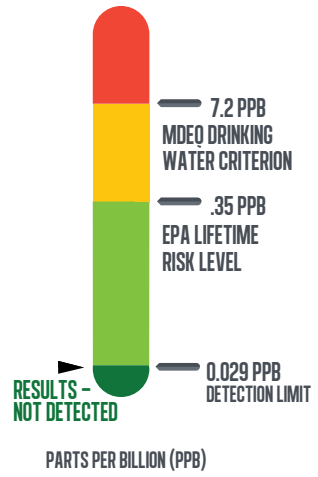
### MONTHLY WATER QUALITY DASHBOARD



#### PFOS/PFOA

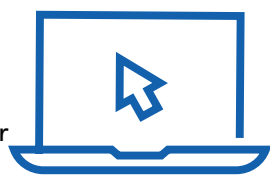


#### 1,4-DIOXANE



#### What's in your water?

The city's water treatment team's No. 1 focus is protection of public health and with that goal in mind, they collect more than 58,000 water samples and conduct more than 177,000 tests each year.



With advances in testing techniques, labs are able to detect very low levels of contaminants in water samples. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk.

To learn more about your drinking water and the City of Ann Arbor's efforts to protect its safety, read the Water Quality Report at [www.a2gov.org/WaterReport](http://www.a2gov.org/WaterReport) or the 1,4-dioxane fact sheet and frequently asked questions resource at [www.QualityWaterMatters.org](http://www.QualityWaterMatters.org).



Sarah Page with Ann Arbor's water drop character at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market.

the Gelman Science contaminated site to the National Priority List under the CERCLA program. A joint working session was held on June 6 that included City of Ann Arbor Council, Washtenaw County Commissioners, Scio Township Board, and the Ann Arbor Township supervisor and was hosted by Representative Debbie Dingell at the Michigan Innovation Headquarters on Wagner Road in Scio Township. At this working session that was conducted under the Open Meetings Act, representatives from each of these elected bodies listened to impacted residents and customers as part of public comment, and shared their positions on this potential request.

After the closed session, the elected officials went into a closed session meeting with attorneys to discuss next steps. After the closed session, elected officials agreed to meet again in three months (in September) to be briefed on the progress of settlement negotiations with Gelman Science before making a final determination on whether to collectively petition the governor.

As you can see, there are several initiatives ongoing, and I commit to providing updates in future Quality Water Matters issues. In the meantime, questions are always welcome by calling 734.994.2840 or emailing [water@a2gov.org](mailto:water@a2gov.org).

Respectfully,

*Brian Steglitz*

Brian Steglitz, P.E., Drinking Water License F-1, Water Treatment Plant Manager, Ann Arbor resident

## HURON RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

### Monitoring the Huron River's chemistry and flow

Each summer, more than 75 HRWC volunteers collect hundreds of water samples from roughly 30 sites throughout the Huron River watershed and downriver area.

Looking at water chemistry and flow rates annually is one of the ways to get a true sense of the changing conditions of the Huron River and its creeks. The results help the many communities of the Huron and downriver area make decisions and prioritize efforts to protect and restore area waterways based on sound scientific data.

These engaged volunteers dedicate their time to collect vital water quality information for HRWC and the nonprofit's partners like the City of Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County. From all walks of life, the people participating include retirees, families, young and seasoned professionals, and students from graduate school, college and high school. Some are experienced, having done it for multiple seasons, while many are trying it for the first time.



In teams of two to four people, they head out to the Huron River and its tributaries big and small. Once there, they monitor real-time chemical parameters and collect water samples that are then tested by local utility lab partners, including the lab at the City of Ann Arbor's water treatment plant. Samples are analyzed for phosphorus, nitrogen, sediment and bacteria. Volunteers also measure stream and river flow in all kinds of weather.

HRWC started the Chemistry and Flow Monitoring program in 2002. With the support of many, it has flourished and become a model for volunteer monitoring across the state and nation. HRWC's web-based Huron River Info Stream hosts maps and compiled data from all of the organization's monitoring programs. Visitors can learn more about the Huron River or their home creek and sign up to volunteer: [www.hrwc.org](http://www.hrwc.org).

### Did you know?

The Ann Arbor Water Treatment Plant is open 24/7, 365 days a year. Staff answers calls from customers on a wide range of water topics.

One frequent question staff answers during warmer months is what is the reddish-pink residue that I found in my bathroom? Answer: this pink residue **is not** caused by bacteria in the city's drinking water, but is caused by the growth of an airborne bacterium called *Serratia marcescens* or commonly referred to as bathroom mold.

Construction and remodeling activities can stir up dust and other airborne particles carrying the *Serratia* bacteria. Open windows can allow airborne bacteria into a house. As a moist and warm environment, a bathroom is a place where bacteria can thrive. The recommended cleaning method is scrubbing the area with bleach and allowing the area to thoroughly dry.