Airport Update for Environment, Agriculture, Natural Resources Committee

JULY 14TH, 2022

Background

- PFAS environmental contamination is a global issue because it impacts us in our homes and communities through products that continue to be sold and from the effects of past activities. "PFAS are found in water, air, fish, and soil at locations across the nation and the globe." https://www.epa.gov/pfas/pfas-explained. It is increasingly being detected in remote areas, including rainwater.
- Responding to PFAS impacts involves multiple challenges, including the current absence of effective and sustainable treatment technologies.
- PFAS is present at the Airport because it has been an ingredient in FAA-mandated aqueous-film-forming foam, or AFFF, used for fire suppression training and emergencies.
- In October 2019, DNR sent "responsible party" letters to Dane County Regional Airport (DCRA), City of Madison, and Wisconsin Air National Guard (WI ANG) for PFAS contamination on and near Airport property.

Sampling and Other Response Work at the Airport

- The responsible parties are working in partnership on a deliberative, multi-faceted approach to investigate and remediate PFAS in a manner that ensures the most effective use of resources.
- The approach includes a pilot study to develop potentially groundbreaking treatment technology. The pilot results are promising but cannot be shared yet because the work is proprietary. We anticipate there will be results to share early next year.
- From April to June 2019, DCRA sampled its storm water system for PFAS. Sampling occurred on four dates at seven different locations on DCRA property.
- In February 2020 DCRA collected samples from 41 locations of the DCRA storm water system.
- In July 2020 DCRA completed another round of testing from the same 41 locations within the DCRA storm water system as the February testing. DCRA and its partners also took soil and groundwater samples at each fire training area.

Sampling and Other Response Work at the Airport

- In September of 2020 the National Guard Bureau announced a Remedial Investigation (RI) for Truax Field, one of only 12 announced nationwide from over 100 DOD sites with PFAS contamination.
- To inform and guide the continuing investigation process, the RI planning process incorporated the results of past sampling work, including DCRA's prior sampling.
- Most recently, in May and June this year, WI ANG completed soil and water sampling as part of the RI. Over 300 samples were taken. These samples will help inform where groundwater monitoring wells will be located later this year that will allow for regular sampling.
- In addition to the RI process, DCRA is working collaboratively with its partners to restore the storm water system to reduce PFAS infiltration into the system. DCRA conducted televising of the areas of the system in May of 2021 in which the highest PFAS levels were detected to identify the system conditions and plan for restoration needs.

Upcoming Sampling

- After the storm water system restoration work is completed, DCRA and its partners will conduct additional sampling of the storm water system. They will repeat the earlier sampling and collect samples at the same six locations on three different days. This will be compared with the first round to determine whether the repairs helped reduced PFAS entering the storm water system.
- After the storm water system restoration work, DCRA and its partners will also conduct three sampling events of Starkweather Creek to measure the effectiveness of the restoration work.
- Sampling of the groundwater wells installed through the RI process will continue on regular established intervals.
- Ongoing sampling has also occurred and will continue as a means to evaluate the progress of the pilot remediation technology study, including areas of the DCRA storm water system.