



Town of Randolph

Office of the
TOWN COUNCIL
From the desk of
Councilor Gordon

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Sept. 9, 2023

To: Rep. Steven Lynch (MA-8)
37 Belmont Street, 2nd Floor, Suite 3, Brockton, MA 02301

And: Rep. Ayanna Pressley (MA-7)
1295 River Street, Hyde Park, MA 02136

Dear Reps. Lynch and Pressley --

I'm seeking your help in getting access to a federal Superfund site in Holbrook, the Baird-McGuire site on the Randolph border. This site has been leaching PFAS into our Tri-Town water supply for many years, and I'd like to conduct soil testing to identify PFAS hotspots, which might then be remediated. Some details:

On July 17, the Holbrook Conservation Commission denied the construction permit for the TLA Trash Transfer Station because they had failed to do PFAS testing, as ordered by the Randolph Town Council and Holbrook Select Board in joint Resolutions in 2022. PFAS has been found in high concentrations in several wells in the Baird-McGuire Superfund site, which overlaps the TLA site and has spillover into Randolph and our Tri-Town reservoir. I'm following up our temporary victory with new joint Randolph-Holbrook actions to strengthen PFAS testing and PFAS remediation when hotspots are found.

I'd like Rep. Lynch's and Rep. Pressley's help in authorizing PFAS testing (and possible PFAS remediation) on the Superfund site -- like a "letter of support" for my PFAS clean-up plan linked below, which has been met with strong pushback from Town officials and equally strong support from voters. Many of the PFAS testing sites would be water testing downstream in Randolph and soil testing on adjacent Randolph properties -- but the target is the Superfund site itself, which is entirely within Holbrook.

MassDEP has conducted several PFAS water sample tests in wells on the Superfund site, and found high levels of PFAS in 2019. That water runs downstream to our reservoir, so those high PFAS levels are definitely contributing to our drinking water having PFAS levels over the state limit of 20 ppt. I've been pushing to add soil testing -- to find the actual PFAS hotspots -- but we need federal authorization to enter the (locked behind fences) Superfund site.

MassDEP has conducted a series of PFAS water tests at locations downstream in Randolph, in 2022-2023. Those tests revealed PFAS levels exceeding 20 ppt downstream

from the Superfund site (and upstream from the Tri-Town reservoir). That points toward the Superfund site as a PFAS source -- but we'll need further water testing to demonstrate whether that's true, or just some other nearby PFAS source. I've written a Randolph Town Council Resolution to conduct that PFAS water testing, which I plan to also introduce as a Holbrook Select Board Resolution. The proposed Resolution is attached.

MassDEP has no capacity to conduct PFAS soil testing so my Town Council Resolution calls for soil testing to be conducted via private PFAS testing labs. MassDEP has a limited capacity to conduct timely PFAS water tests at varying locations, so my Town Council Resolution calls for conducting those test with a private lab too. The goal would be to trace our Tri-Town Reservoir's PFAS contamination back upstream to its source.

To brief you about the Tri-Town Reservoir: Randolph, Holbrook, and Braintree share a single reservoir, which currently has a Tri-Town water treatment plant under construction. Currently, there are two water treatment plants, one for Braintree and one for Randolph-Holbrook. All three water treatment plants exceeded the state PFAS limit of 20 ppt in recent years, and had to send out PFAS warnings to all water users. Braintree installed GAC filters over a year ago, and Randolph-Holbrook followed this year -- and the new Tri-Town water treatment plant will include GAC filters as well.

The expense of those GAC filters is about a half-million dollars per year to "recharge" the GAC filters as they become saturated with PFAS. The purpose of finding PFAS sources is to remove the PFAS so it doesn't enter our reservoir, rather than filtering it out as it leaves our reservoir. If we can cut half of the source PFAS, we would reduce the GAC filtering cost by a quarter-million dollars per year.

I spoke with Rep. Pressley about this issue at her "Green Justice" event in Randolph today, and she suggested including Rep. Lynch for further action. I note that the voters in the audience expressed support for taking further action on PFAS, as there has been strong support in Randolph for several years. The recent vote in Holbrook indicates voter support for PFAS action in their municipal agencies, too.

I look forward to working with your office to move forward on PFAS testing on the federal Superfund site.

Sincerely,

Jesse Gordon
Randolph District 2 Town Councilor
Text 617-320-6989
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References: <https://jessegordon.com/CleanUpPFAS.htm> including PFAS DWP proposal attached.
Superfund info at <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csinfo.cfm?id=0100392>