

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 2023**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, June 6, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Hearing Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

Present: Peggy Judd, Chairman; Tom Crosby, Vice-Chairman; Ann English, Supervisor

Staff Present: Richard G. Karwaczka, County Administrator
Sharon Gilman, Deputy County Administrator
Christine Roberts, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney
Tim Mattix, Clerk of the Board

Attendees: Paula Panzino, Chief Science Officer, ADEQ
Jennifer Botsford, Environmental Health Services Chief, ADHS
Laura Carusona, Drinking Water Section Manager, ADEQ
Caroline Oppleman, Communications Director, ADEQ
Melissa Hayes, Southeast Arizona Community Liaison, ADEQ

Chairman Judd called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA IS OPEN FOR DISCUSSION

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Presentation and discussion with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ): What is Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and What is ADEQ Doing in Cochise County?

Ms. Panzino presented this item, and reviewed her professional background. Others in attendance from ADEQ and the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) introduced themselves. Ms. Panzino displayed a video presentation entitled "An Introduction to PFAS in Arizona" [video available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDasKm9M1vc>].

The video detailed the background of PFAS, noting that they are used in a wide variety of applications and products. It reviewed the differences between two of the most widely used and studied molecules found in PFAS: Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctane Sulfonate or Perfluorooctane Sulfonic Acid (PFOS), both of which have declined in use since 2002. PFAS exposure has been linked to negative health effects, based on the length of exposure and concentration. The video detailed methods to eliminate exposure to contaminated drinking water and the lifecycle of PFAS, and actions taken by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2009, 2016 and 2022. In March, 2023, the EPA proposed a national primary drinking water regulation (Regulation), which would create a Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for six common PFAS. The video outlined expected EPA actions, noting that the Regulation is expected to be finalized within the next year, with implementation three years later. ADEQ initiatives include: completion of targeted statewide PFAS screening; conducting comprehensive drinking water testing for public water systems

with fewer than 3,300 customers; working with affected water providers on long-term solutions; and, seeking available federal funding to address PFAS in Arizona. ADEQ created a pilot program to help fire departments dispose of PFAS-containing firefighting foam. The video detailed various methods to limit exposure to PFAS in water, and reviewed various treatment systems. Additional information is available on the ADEQ website.

Ms. Panzino responded to questions from the Board. She clarified that the Regulation applying to public water systems (Systems) is for those who serve more than 3,300 people. The firefighting foam goes to a hazardous waste landfill. There are no prohibitions on the disposal of PFAS treatment systems. Preventing PFAS from re-entering the environment through landfills is dependent on the class of the landfill, whether the landfill is lined, and the condition of the liner. The cost of a household treatment system ranges from \$4,000 to \$10,000, not including ongoing maintenance such as replacing cartridges.

The Board and Ms. Panzino discussed potential costs and treatment systems available to Systems; treatment systems currently available include granular activated carbon, reverse osmosis, or ion exchange. Ms. Panzino discussed the federal funding available to Systems. In response to the Board, Ms. Panzino detailed the difficulty of predicting the likelihood of PFAS developing in the future. The Board, Ms. Panzino and Ms. Botsford also discussed the presence of PFAS in humans; the presence of PFAS can be tested in a blood serum, though the testing is not currently commercially available in Arizona. Doctors are able to treat the symptoms without needing to know that an individual was exposed to PFAS. Ms. Panzino stated that a possible role for counties is how to fund residential connections to existing Systems, rather than private wells, and noted that funding is available through the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority (WIFA).

Ms. Panzino reviewed an ADEQ fact sheet specific to the County [attached to the agenda]. There are 104 Systems in the County, with 56 eligible for the ADEQ testing and 49 participating. PFAS were detected in five Systems, with two having levels above the EPA's MCL. She reviewed wastewater and biosolid sampling locations and testing results, federally regulated sites for which ADEQ monitors cleanup activities, and the fire departments participating in the pilot program for the disposal of PFAS-containing foam. She reviewed charts of the two Systems with PFAS levels above the EPA MCL; Arizona Electric Power Apache is a small System that provides water to its employees and for its use only, and the East Slope Water West (East Slope) is south of Fort Huachuca, with Sierra Vista to the east. While ADEQ is notifying Systems of their results, there is no requirement for the Systems to notify their customers. East Slope released information to its customers, resulting in community concern; ADEQ is not attending a community meeting on June 15, 2023, but will sponsor a meeting on July 11, 2023.

The Board and Ms. Panzino discussed regulatory support for ADEQ and methods by which private wells can be tested. Individuals can be referred to ADHS, who provides guidance to private well owners, or may call ADEQ with questions.

Chairman Judd adjourned the meeting at 1:48 p.m.

APPROVED:

Peggy Judd, Chairman

ATTEST:

Interim Clerk of the Board