



MEDIA RELEASE

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Cascade, Grand Rapids secure \$5 million state grant to extend municipal water to Township residents

More than 400 homes with well water contaminated by PFAS to benefit from funding

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – Hundreds of Cascade Charter Township residents whose well water has been contaminated by PFAS will be able to connect to the municipal water system of Grand Rapids thanks to a \$5 million grant from the state of Michigan.

Cascade applied for a Consolidation and Contamination Risk Reduction, or C2R2, grant the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy, or EGLE, recently awarded to the City of Grand Rapids to extend municipal water to more than 400 homes in the Trout Creek area of the Township. Through five sampling phases, EGLE has identified PFAS contamination indicating a need to pursue a long-term solution protective of public health through the extension of municipal drinking water to those impacted or potentially impacted in the Trout Creek area.

The solution calls for expanding the water system's service district in the Township by extending mains and other system fixtures to connect up to 473 properties with residential wells to the portion of the City's municipal water system that serves the Township. The first phase of the project, which is covered by the grant, will connect up to 256 homes.

The two municipalities have a retail service agreement that allows the City to operate within the Township, where it already serves thousands of customers.

The Grand Rapids City Commission approved the C2R2 grant agreement with EGLE during its regular meeting June 15. Preliminary engineering work has begun on the project, which is estimated to cost \$13.2 million and be completed in two phases. Final engineering will start when grant funds are forwarded from the state to the City of Grand Rapids. Cascade Township hopes to break ground on the project in 2022, with an expected completion in 2023.

The Township is working with the Gerald R. Ford International Airport to secure the rest of the payment for the service expansion.

“Cascade Township is very pleased the state has allocated \$5 million to extend municipal water to residents whose drinking water has been contaminated with PFAS,” Cascade Township Supervisor Grace Lesperance said. “This grant allows us to begin the process of ensuring residents will have access to clean, safe drinking water.

“We are continuing our discussions with officials at Ford Airport and hope to come to a speedy and equitable resolution to this matter. The Township appreciates the opportunity to partner with the City of Grand Rapids and EGLE to develop an expedited solution to this issue.”

EGLE has monitored residential drinking wells in Cascade Township’s Trout Creek neighborhood since 2019. This area is near the Gerald R. Ford International Airport east of the 36th Street exits off I-96 and west of the Thornapple River.

Through five sampling phases, EGLE has sampled 364 residential drinking water wells in the Trout Creek area, with PFAS detected in more than 60 percent of results.

“The City of Grand Rapids Water System is extremely pleased to be able to partner with Cascade Charter Township to receive this grant from EGLE,” Grand Rapids Water System Manager Wayne Jernberg said. “Our partnership with Cascade spans many decades, and we continue to work collaboratively to ensure that all residents of Cascade have access to safe and high-quality drinking water.”

The C2R2 grant program was developed by EGLE under Michigan’s new Clean Water Plan to update the state’s drinking water and sewer systems and reduce chemical contamination. Grant applicants receive funding for projects that will remove or reduce PFAS or other contaminants, consolidate water systems or connect private residential wells to a local municipal water system.

PFAS – per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances – are a group of human-made chemicals that have been manufactured and used since the 1940s. They are used in various industries, from fast food to cookware to firefighting, and are known for their repelling qualities. They have been linked to certain types of cancers and other health issues.

About Cascade Charter Township

Home to more than 19,000 residents, Cascade Charter Township is committed to serving the public by providing the finest local governmental services possible with respect, efficiency and integrity. With the Thornapple River at its heart, Cascade Township is recognized as an excellent place to live, work, play and raise a family. For more information, visit www.cascadetwp.com.

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