NEWS FROM

ULSTER COUNTY

County Executive Jen Metzger

******For Immediate Release******
Date: Tuesday, July 7, 2026
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PFAS Testing and Mitigation Rebate Program Reopens for Ulster County Residents with Private Wells

KINGSTON, NY - The New York State Department of Health has reopened applications for the Private Well PFAS Testing and Mitigation Rebate Pilot Program after a temporary pause, and is now accepting applications from Ulster County residents who rely on private wells for their drinking water. The program provides free PFAS testing as well as mitigation rebates if PFAS levels do not meet New York State drinking water standards.

Ulster County is one of six counties participating in the pilot program, which County Executive Jen Metzger announced in her State of the County Address earlier this year. The program — led by the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH), Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) — provides free PFAS testing for private wells and offers rebates of up to $5,000 for whole-house treatment systems, $10,000 for connection to public water where available, and $1,000 for point-of-use treatment systems in certain cases.

New York State has identified high priority municipalities in Ulster County with elevated potential risk for PFAS contamination based on well density, land-use patterns, and possible sources of exposure. These municipalities — largely concentrated in the southern portion of the County — include Plattekill, Lloyd, Shawangunk, Wawarsing, New Paltz, Saugerties, and Ulster. These communities were selected due to a combination of potential risk factors and the number of wells identified by the State as potentially eligible for testing and mitigation. However, residents in any Ulster County municipality may still apply for the program, even if they live outside these priority areas.

The program opened in March, but was temporarily paused in April by NYS DOH after receiving a higher than expected number of applications in order to allow time to complete all

pending free well tests and ensure sufficient funds remained available for eligible mitigation rebates. With that work now complete, the application portal has reopened for additional households.

"I'm very pleased to see the testing portal reopen," **said Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger.** "The overwhelming response from our residents when the application opened in March shows the degree to which the public is aware of, and concerned about, the dangers of PFAS. This program makes it cost-effective for our residents to test their own wells and take remedial action if needed, and I want to thank Governor Hochul and our state partners for moving quickly to reopen the portal. I also want to thank Public Health Director Eve Walter and her team for their leadership in implementing this pilot locally and supporting residents throughout the process."

PFAS — per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances — are a group of chemicals used in many household and commercial products. They can persist in the environment and have been detected in drinking water across the country. New York State's drinking water standards for PFOA and PFOS (two of the most studied PFAS) are 10 parts per trillion, and these values are used as guidelines to determine eligibility for mitigation rebates.

Residents may be eligible if their drinking water comes from a private well in Ulster County. Property owners may apply for free testing; tenants may also apply if they provide a notarized property-owner acknowledgment. Businesses with transient non-community water systems — such as parks, rest stops, convenience stores, and restaurants with their own wells — may also qualify. Wells associated with known contamination sites already part of a remediation program are not eligible.

The program offers free PFAS testing conducted by New York State. If results show PFOA or PFOS at or above 10 parts per trillion, eligible property owners may apply for rebates to install a whole-house PFAS treatment system, connect to public water where feasible, or install certified point-of-use systems in cases where whole-house treatment is not possible. Funding is limited, and application periods may open and close depending on demand.

Applications can be submitted online at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS, which is the preferred method. Paper applications are also available on the program website under "Documents". Rebate applications must be submitted after mitigation work is completed.

Program inquiries can be directed to the program hotline number: 1-800-616-9275, the program help email: *PrivateWellPFAS@hrpassociates.com*, or the program website at

health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS. For local assistance to navigate the process, please call the Ulster County Department of Health at (845) 340-3022.

For more information and to apply, visit health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.

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