



Water Quality Association

of Wisconsin

POSITION PAPER: NITRATES

WQAW POSITION STATEMENT: The final barrier to ensuring clean drinking water is through water treatment systems either point of entry (POE) or point of use (POU). For most regulated and non-regulated contaminants, certified (state approved) water treatment devices can reduce these contaminants below the EPA guidelines.

As the state Legislature looks to address Wisconsin's water issues, we believe water treatment systems are integral to the safety of Wisconsin's drinking water and as a permanent solution to many of these water concerns.

NITRATES IN WATER: The principle sources of nitrate contamination in water are fertilizers, animal waste, and septic tank wastes. The water supplies most vulnerable to nitrate contamination are in agricultural areas and in well waters having a close or hydraulic relationship to septic tanks.

HOW TO REMOVE NITRATES FROM WATER

Residential Treatment Point-of-Entry (POE) Point-of-Use (POU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reverse Osmosis with thin film composite (TFC) membrane• Anion Exchange (Type I and II, Clform, subject to sulfates competitive ion exchange)• Nitrate "Selective" Anion Exchange resins• Distillation
Municipal Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blending• Disinfection with chlorine, chloramine and ozone will oxidize nitrite to less hazardous nitrate• Anion Exchange

2019-2020 LEGISLATIVE BILLS SPECIFIC TO NITRATE CONTAMINATION

AB 789/SB 724 (Shankland/Testin)

ISSUE: Modifies the existing well compensation grant program to prioritize water treatment for nitrate contamination between 10 and 25 ppm. Adds an additional \$1 million to the program in the next year, with \$200,000 earmarked for claims of water containing nitrates at 10 to 25 ppm.

STATUS: Introduced 1/20, referred to committees.

WQAW POSITION: Support-Priority

AB 148/SB 137 (Testin/Kurtz)

ISSUE: Creates a new nitrate testing grant program in DHS and appropriates \$10 million to the program. Grants are capped at \$2500 and eligible costs include well testing, installation of filtration system, replacement of well or replacement of water supply. In addition, the bill was amended to authorize testing, and subsequent recommendations, notifications, and reports, to be completed by licensed restricted appliance plumbers in addition to well drillers and pump installers.

STATUS: Introduced 3/19, public hearings held.

WQAW POSITION: Support-Priority

AB 21 (Shankland/Smith)

ISSUE: Adds an additional \$1 million to existing Well Compensation Grant Program. Modifies income thresholds. Well Remediation or connecting to a new water supply are prioritized above water treatment.

STATUS: Introduced 2/19, referred to committees.

WQAW POSITION: Oppose