



Georgetown North Groundwater Site

FAQs

Where is the site located?

The Georgetown North Groundwater Site is located in Sussex County within the Town of Georgetown. The site is an approximately 0.27-square mile area surrounding Georgetown's public wells.

Is the water safe to drink?

The Town of Georgetown is currently treating the public drinking water to remove contamination including tetrachloroethylene (PCE), also known as perchloroethylene, trichloroethylene (TCE) and benzene. The contamination is removed by an air stripping system, a treatment process that bubbles large volumes of air through the water being treated to remove dissolved gases and volatile substances. The drinking water supplied by the Town of Georgetown meets the applicable federal and state safe drinking water standards.

What were the levels of contamination detected in the samples from the public wells?

The most recent sampling results for the untreated groundwater samples in 2020 indicate concentrations of PCE at 4.3 micrograms per liter (ug/L) and TCE at 2.1 ug/L, which are above the state safe drinking water standards, also known maximum contaminants levels (MCLs), of 1 ug/L but below the federal MCL of 5 ug/L.

The most recent results for treated drinking water samples collected in February 2022 show the concentrations continue to meet federal and state drinking water standards.

What are the potential sources of the contamination?

Potential sources of contamination near the wells include the following sites listed below, where historical operations may have included the use of compounds which may have contained PCE and TCE. Additional sources of contamination in groundwater may also be identified in the future as a result of EPA's investigation.

- Thoro-Kleen Site (DE-0207)
- Georgetown Cleaners Site (DE-0113)
- Former Pep-Up OU-2 (DE-1571)
- Georgetown Coal Gas (DE-0188)
- Former FAS Mart #259 (DE-1586)
- Christy Tire (5-000309)
- Perdue Farms (5-000083)

How many people are served by the Georgetown water system?

According to the most recent Public Water Supply Source Water Assessment for the Georgetown Water Department completed by DNREC's Source Water Assessment and Protection Program, the town serves a population of approximately 6,000 people and has approximately 1,402 service connections.

How deep are the public supply wells and when were they installed?

Georgetown's three public drinking water supply wells draw water from the unconfined Columbia aquifer. Well No. 1 (DNREC Well Permit No.-10325) is a total depth of 120 feet below ground surface (bgs) and was constructed in 1948. Well No. 2 (DNREC Well Permit No.-10326) is screened from 100-115 feet bgs and was constructed in 1953. Well No.2R (Well Permit No.-62576) is screened from 90-125 feet bgs and was constructed in 1985.

Why were the Georgetown supply wells selected for sampling?

The Georgetown public wells located on King Street had historic detections of volatile organic compounds. Over the years, DNREC has identified, investigated and conducted remedial actions at a number of HSCA sites in the area. In 2019 and 2020, a Preliminary Assessment (PA) and Site Inspection (SI) were performed within the Georgetown North Groundwater Site under a cooperative agreement with the EPA. Untreated water data was reviewed during (PA) and Georgetown Public Well 2R was sampled during the SI.

The results of the PA are presented in the DNREC Georgetown Groundwater Operable Unit Preliminary Assessment Report dated February 2019. The report is available at the Delaware Environmental Navigator (DEN) under the site code (DE-1407), or site name, Georgetown Groundwater OU.

The results of the SI are presented in the EA Engineering Site Inspection Report, Georgetown North Groundwater Plume dated November 2020. The report is available at the Delaware Environmental Navigator (DEN) under the site code (DE-1717), or site name, Georgetown North Groundwater Site.

What is the NPL and how does the listing process work?

The Superfund National Priorities List (NPL) process provides a means of identifying contaminated sites (and the associated potential responsible parties) that warrant remedial action or cleanup under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA). Cleanups at NPL sites are managed and financed under the Federal Superfund program.

The EPA ranks sites for further investigation using a Hazard Ranking System (HRS) screening. The Georgetown North Groundwater Site exceeded the score required for potential listing on the NPL primarily because a public drinking water source was impacted by contaminants. EPA recommended proposing the site to the NPL. After a site such as this is identified, there is a 60-day public comment period on the proposed listing. If the comments do not affect EPA's scoring of the site using the HRS, the site is then eligible for listing on the NPL.

- EPA will publish a final rule in the Federal Register and the Georgetown North Groundwater site will become a Superfund Site in September 2022. For more information on the NPL listing process, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-national-priorities-list-npl>

Whom should I contact for additional questions?

For more information on the proposed listing and [EPA's Superfund Program](#), please contact:

- Angela Ithier, Community Involvement Coordinator, EPA Region 3, 215-814-5248 or by email: ithier.angela@epa.gov
- Connor O'Loughlin, Site Assessment Manager, EPA Region 3, 215-814-3304, or by email: oloughlin.connor@epa.gov
- Karla Guerrero, Remedial Project Manager, EPA Region 3, 215-814-3378 or email guerrerp.karla@epa.gov

For media inquiries:

- David Sternberg, Office of Communications and Government Relations, U.S. EPA, Region 3, 215-814-5548, or by email: sternberg.david@epa.gov

For additional questions to DNREC regarding the Georgetown North Groundwater Site, please contact:

- Rick Galloway, Project Manager, DNREC Remediation Section at 302-395-2600, or by email: rick.galloway@delaware.gov
- Qazi Salahuddin, Program Administrator, DNREC Remediation Section at 302-395-2600, or by email: qazi.salahuddin@delaware.gov



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