

**Annual Report to the  
North Carolina General Assembly**

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***Bernard Allen Emergency Drinking  
Water Fund***

(July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025)

**Division of Waste Management**



**NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

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## Executive Summary

The Bernard Allen Memorial Emergency Drinking Water Fund, administered by the N.C. Division of Waste Management, was created in 2006 by the General Assembly in N.C.G.S. 87-98 to improve the state's response to water supply well contamination and provide low-income households with a safe drinking water supply. In 2021, N.C.G.S. 87-98 was amended to allow use of funds for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in private water supplies.

The fund has three authorized uses: 1) pay for notice to persons whose privately owned wells are at risk from groundwater contamination; 2) pay for the costs of testing private wells; and 3) provide an alternate drinking water supply to well owners affected by the contamination.

The Bernard Allen Fund Program (Program) continues to provide critical services for many qualifying residents of North Carolina through well testing, providing emergency bottled water, and assisting in permanent waterline connections, point-of-entry treatment or point-of-use systems for households. In fiscal year 2024-25, the fund's resources continued to be focused primarily on providing alternate water to affected residents and investigating potentially contaminated wells across the state through sampling.

As shown in the summary table below (Table 1), this fiscal year, the fund has been used to collect 939 drinking water well samples statewide and 235 households received alternate water through bottled water, waterlines, new well, treatment systems, treatment system maintenance, or reimbursement for treatment system installation. Table 1 also shows that since the inception of the Bernard Allen Program 7,481 private wells have been sampled. To date 390 households have received alternate water.

The Program regularly communicates with local health departments on water supply sample results and other activities related to the water supply wells. Program staff continue to work with the Division of Waste Management to identify private water supplies at risk of PFAS and other contamination statewide.

DEQ is required to report no later than October 1 of each year to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources and the Fiscal Research Division of the General Assembly on the implementation of N.C.G.S. 87-98, the Bernard Allen Memorial Emergency Drinking Water Fund.

**Table 1. Summary of Wells Sampled and Alternate Water Provided**

|                                                    | FY 2024-25 |      | Total over Time |      |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------|------|-----------------|------|
|                                                    | Non-PFAS   | PFAS | Non-PFAS        | PFAS |
| Wells Sampled                                      | 525        | 414  | 6784            | 697  |
| Bottled Water Provided                             | 17         | 113  | 377*            | 197* |
| Waterlines Installed                               | 0          | 0    | 131             | 0    |
| Point of Entry Filter Systems Installed/Maintained | 42         | 0    | 522**           | 0    |
| Point of Use Filter Systems Installed/Maintained   | 0          | 33   | 0               | 70   |
| Reimbursements Issued                              | 0          | 30   | 0               | 46   |
| Wells Installed                                    | 0          | 0    | 1               | 0    |

\* Includes homes that received bottled water over multiple fiscal years while waiting for treatment system, waterline or well installation.

\*\* Includes homes that have had treatment systems maintained over multiple fiscal years.

## **Fiscal Year 2024-25 Activities**

In fiscal year (FY) 2024-25, uses of the Bernard Allen Memorial Emergency Drinking Water Fund (fund) administered by the Division of Waste Management (Division) allowed the continued focus on three major priorities:

- 1) providing permanent alternate water sources,
- 2) reviewing and researching of sources of contamination (sites that may have put nearby water supply wells and residents at risk), and
- 3) testing of private wells known or suspected of being contaminated.

### **Site Review and Research**

The Bernard Allen Program (Program) staff continue to evaluate the status of privately owned drinking water wells within areas of known or suspected contamination. Local government and other records are researched to determine if any affected residential wells have been connected to municipal water systems, if other wells in an area of concern may potentially be affected, potential sources of contamination, and ownership of affected residences. Staff test identified wells, and work with owners and local governments to provide alternate water supplies if the wells are contaminated. In FY 2024-25, staff evaluated approximately 156 contaminated sites for water supply well sampling in the vicinity using the fund. Most of the groundwater contamination associated with these sites had migrated toward multiple residential wells. Site reviews include the following activities:

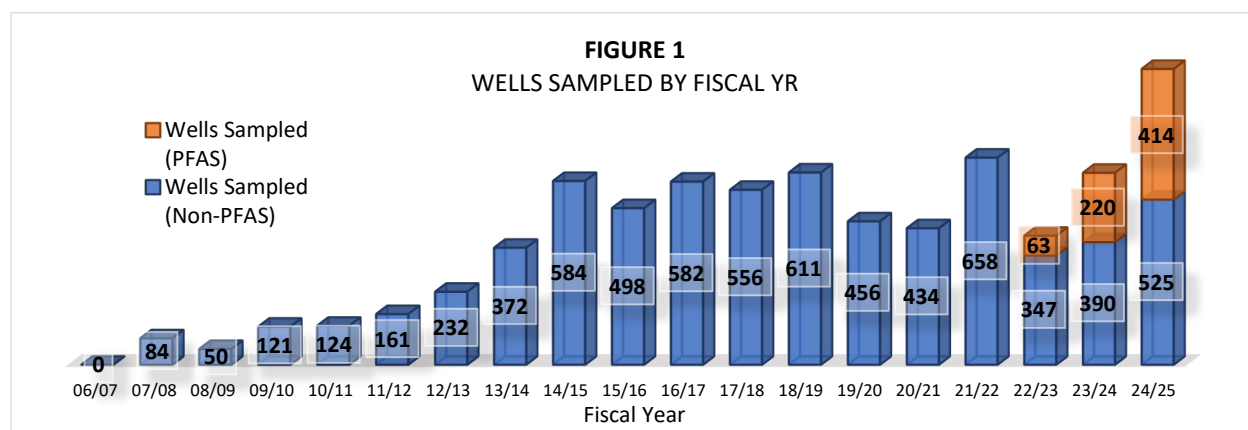
- Review of historical information and previous assessment work performed on the site(s);
- Identification of the affected and potentially affected properties;
- Identification of additional properties with drinking water wells in use within a 1,000-foot radius of affected and potentially affected properties;
- Identification of potential sources of contamination; and
- Location of public waterlines in the area and any properties with prior work by the Program that have since been connected to the public water system.

### **Sampling of Private Wells**

The Program samples wells across the state in the vicinity of orphan sites where no responsible party can be identified and that may be under the purview of various DEQ programs where there is no funding available for such tasks. In addition to these orphan sites, the program receives referrals from county health departments where contamination in drinking water wells has been detected by county-led sampling efforts. In many of these cases, the sources of contamination cannot be determined, and it is difficult to predict whether contamination will migrate, or levels will increase or decrease over time.

During FY 2024-25, Program staff sent 1,545 letters to well owners to request permission to sample their drinking water wells from which 650 permissions were granted. An additional 289 owners granted their permission by phone for PFAS sampling in southeastern counties.

Figure 1 shows the Program's sampling history. This past fiscal year, samples were collected with permission from 939 private wells (44% were sampled for PFAS.) If the analytical results indicated that a contaminant was detected in the water sample, a health risk evaluation was prepared by the Division's toxicologist and mailed to the property owner. The remaining 895 wells were not sampled because owners either did not give permission for sampling, did not respond to the request, indicated they were connected to an alternate water supply, or the property was vacant. Of the wells sampled for PFAS, 69 wells had exceedances of PFAS compounds that are listed in the Chemours Consent Order (filed Feb. 25, 2019 Bladen County, NC) and as such were referred to the Chemours response team for appropriate action.



The number of sites and wells sampled within their respective county is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Drinking Water Wells Sampled by County in FY 2024-2025.**

| County     | # of Sites | Total # of wells sampled | # of well sampled for PFAS | # of well sampled for NON-PFAS | County      | # of Sites | Total # of wells sampled | # of well sampled for PFAS | # of well sampled for NON-PFAS |
|------------|------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Alamance   | 5          | 33                       | 24                         | 9                              | Martin      | 1          | 4                        | 0                          | 4                              |
| Bladen     | 1          | 32                       | 32                         | 0                              | McDowell    | 2          | 19                       | 2                          | 17                             |
| Brunswick  | 3          | 31                       | 28                         | 3                              | Mecklenburg | 15         | 44                       | 0                          | 44                             |
| Buncombe   | 2          | 6                        | 0                          | 6                              | Moore       | 3          | 6                        | 0                          | 6                              |
| Cabarrus   | 1          | 5                        | 0                          | 5                              | New Hanover | 4          | 36                       | 34                         | 2                              |
| Caswell    | 4          | 12                       | 6                          | 6                              | Onslow      | 1          | 13                       | 13                         | 0                              |
| Catawba    | 4          | 18                       | 1                          | 17                             | Orange      | 1          | 4                        | 4                          | 0                              |
| Chatham    | 2          | 5                        | 1                          | 4                              | Pender      | 1          | 6                        | 6                          | 0                              |
| Cleveland  | 1          | 3                        | 0                          | 3                              | Randolph    | 4          | 36                       | 28                         | 8                              |
| Columbus   | 1          | 5                        | 5                          | 0                              | Richmond    | 2          | 10                       | 0                          | 10                             |
| Craven     | 1          | 0                        | 0                          | 0                              | Robeson     | 1          | 2                        | 2                          | 0                              |
| Cumberland | 4          | 109                      | 100                        | 9                              | Rockingham  | 1          | 8                        | 0                          | 8                              |
| Durham     | 2          | 4                        | 0                          | 4                              | Rowan       | 7          | 69                       | 4                          | 65                             |
| Franklin   | 1          | 1                        | 0                          | 1                              | Sampson     | 3          | 80                       | 77                         | 3                              |
| Gaston     | 11         | 87                       | 26                         | 61                             | Stanly      | 1          | 5                        | 0                          | 5                              |
| Guilford   | 11         | 87                       | 13                         | 74                             | Stokes      | 3          | 11                       | 0                          | 11                             |
| Henderson  | 2          | 16                       | 4                          | 12                             | Surry       | 2          | 9                        | 0                          | 9                              |
| Hoke       | 1          | 1                        | 0                          | 1                              | Union       | 1          | 1                        | 0                          | 1                              |
| Iredell    | 5          | 22                       | 3                          | 19                             | Wake        | 10         | 66                       | 0                          | 66                             |
| Lee        | 1          | 1                        | 0                          | 1                              | Wake        | 1          | 5                        | 0                          | 5                              |
| Lincoln    | 2          | 22                       | 0                          | 22                             | Yadkin      | 2          | 2                        | 1                          | 1                              |
| Madison    | 1          | 3                        | 0                          | 3                              |             |            |                          |                            |                                |

## Alternate Water Provided

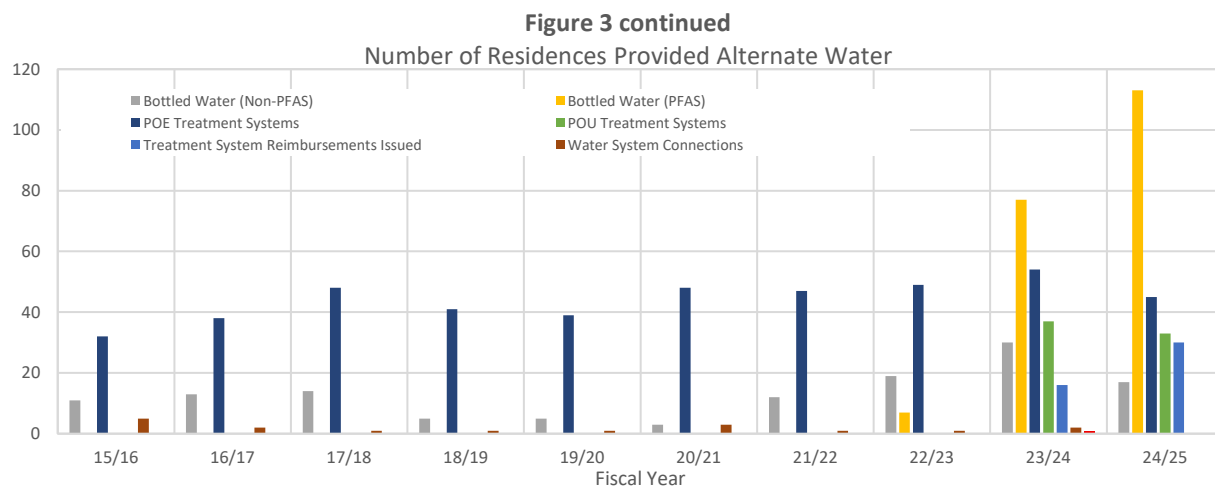
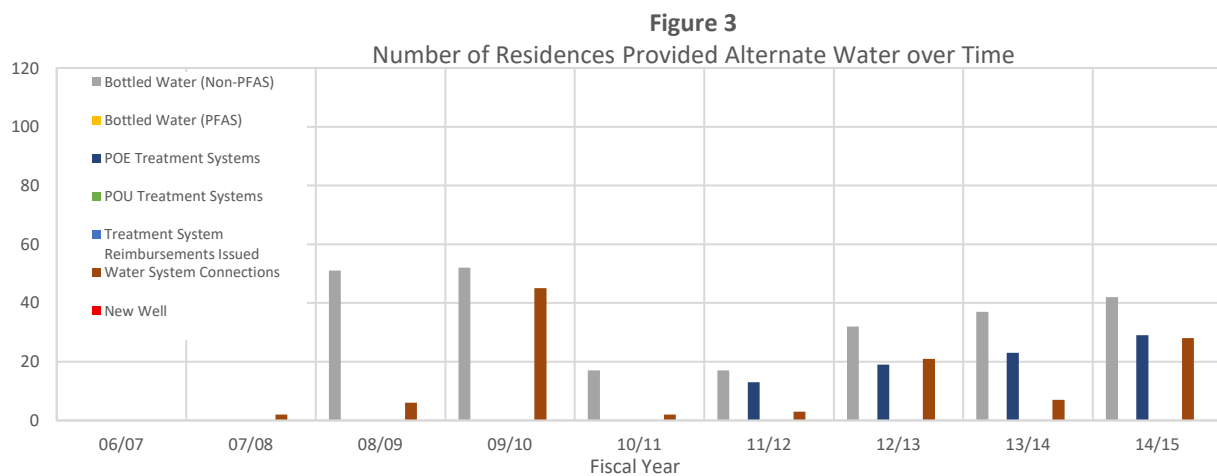
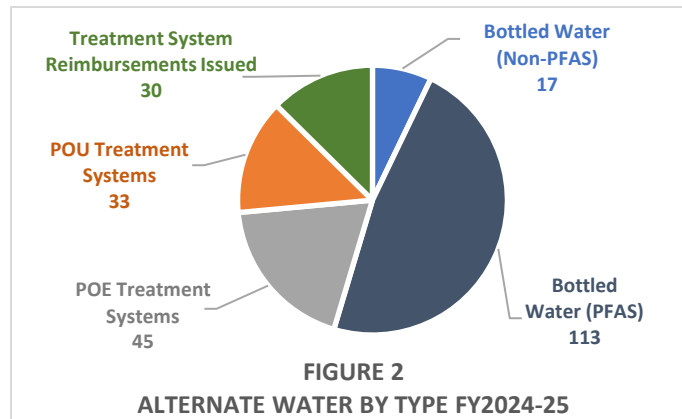
Various types of alternate water for any type of contamination (PFAS and/or other) were provided across the state as detailed below in Table 3. Figure 2 shows the details for this fiscal year and Figure 3 shows the alternate water provided throughout the history of the Bernard Allen Emergency Drinking Water Fund. Figure 3 shows an overall increasing trend in the Program's provision of alternate water over time.

**Table 3. Alternate Water Provided by County.**

| County      | BW Only | BW + POU Install | POU Install Only | BW + POE Install | BW + POE Maintenance | POE Maintenance Only |
|-------------|---------|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Alamance    | 5       | 4                | -                | -                | -                    | -                    |
| Avery       | -       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | 1                    |
| Bladen      | 1       | 2                | -                | -                | -                    | -                    |
| Brunswick   | 5       | 2                | 1                | -                | -                    | -                    |
| Buncombe    | 1       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | 3                    |
| Caswell     | 2       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | -                    |
| Catawba     | 3       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | -                    |
| Cumberland  | 11      | 2                | 1                | -                | -                    | -                    |
| Gaston      | 3       | -                | 1                | -                | 1                    | 2                    |
| Guilford    | 4       | -                | 1                | -                | 1                    | 8                    |
| Hoke        | -       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | 1                    |
| McDowell    | 1       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | 4                    |
| Mecklenburg | 1       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | 2                    |
| Moore       | 1       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | -                    |
| New Hanover | 20      | 2                | 1                | -                | -                    | -                    |
| Orange      | 3       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | 1                    |
| Pender      | 1       | -                | 2                | -                | -                    | -                    |
| Randolph    | 7       | 1                | -                | -                | -                    | 3                    |
| Robeson     | -       | 1                | -                | -                | -                    | -                    |
| Rockingham  | 2       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | 1                    |
| Rowan       | 1       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | 2                    |
| Sampson     | 25      | 14               | -                | -                | -                    | -                    |
| Stokes      | -       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | 1                    |
| Surry       | -       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | 1                    |
| Vance       | -       | -                | -                | -                | -                    | 1                    |
| Wake        | -       | -                | -                | 1                | -                    | 10                   |
| Watauga     | -       | -                | -                | 1                | -                    | -                    |

BW= Bottled Water, POU=Point of Use Filter,  
POE=Point of Entry filter

This fiscal year, bottled water was provided to 130 residences. Of those, 97 homes are receiving bottled water until qualifying criteria are evaluated or a permanent alternate water option is installed in the next fiscal year. The remaining 33 received both bottled water plus a permanent alternate water option this fiscal year.



## **PFAS Treatment System Reimbursement Program**

Since releasing the DEQ Action Strategy for PFAS on June 7, 2022, DEQ has taken significant action to address PFAS in drinking water. In April 2024 EPA released the final, enforceable maximum drinking water standards of 4 ng/L for PFOA & PFAS, and 10 ng/L for PFNA, PFHxS & HFPO-DA (GenX). In consideration of EPA's recently released Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs), a Treatment System Reimbursement Program was developed and implemented under the Bernard Allen Emergency Drinking Water Fund to assist residents that have PFAS contamination above the federal MCLs in their private drinking water wells. Partial funding for treatment systems or, where feasible, connection to public water, is provided to eligible residents on a scale based on household income. Qualifying property owners who cannot afford the purchase of a treatment system or public water connection due to income may receive full funding.

This fiscal year, 414 wells were sampled for PFAS, bringing the total to 697. To date, 197 residences with contamination exceeding at least one of the MCLs have received bottled water due to PFAS contamination. Thirty households have received reimbursement for PFAS treatment under the alternate water assistance program this fiscal year bringing the total to 46 since the inception of the program.

### Bernard Allen Memorial Drinking Water Fund

In FY 2024-25, the fund received \$400,000 in appropriations. There were no appropriated funds dedicated to work associated with PFAS. Expenditures from the fund continue to be primarily used for sampling and analyzing drinking water wells for potential contamination and connecting residences to municipal water systems, providing bottled water, installing point-of-entry and point-of-use filtration treatment systems, maintaining existing point-of-entry filtration treatment systems. A summary of fund expenditures is shown below.

**Table 4. Accounting Summary of the Bernard Allen Memorial Emergency Drinking Water Fund - FY 2024-25 (as of June 30, 2025).**

|                                                                                                            |                                             |               |                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| <b>BEGINNING CASH BALANCE:</b>                                                                             |                                             |               | <b>\$896,806.17</b>  |
| INCOME (Appropriations from General Fund):                                                                 |                                             |               | +\$400,000.00        |
| EXPENDITURES:                                                                                              |                                             |               | - \$974,769.61       |
|                                                                                                            | Lab Testing                                 | \$282,061.09  |                      |
|                                                                                                            | Bottled Water                               | \$72,634.45   |                      |
|                                                                                                            | Point-of-Entry Treatment Systems            | \$235,957.64  |                      |
|                                                                                                            | Point-of-Use Treatment Systems              | \$93,606.51   |                      |
|                                                                                                            | Well Installations/Abandonments             | \$2,940.00    |                      |
|                                                                                                            | PFAS Treatment System Reimbursement Program | \$93,228.32   |                      |
|                                                                                                            | Sampling Contractors and Supplies           | \$124,157.57  |                      |
|                                                                                                            | Fund Administration                         | \$86,311.13   |                      |
|                                                                                                            | Credit for Overpayment                      | (\$16,127.10) |                      |
| <b>BALANCE AS OF JUNE 30, 2025</b>                                                                         |                                             |               | <b>\$322,036.56</b>  |
| OBLIGATED TO CONTRACTS                                                                                     |                                             |               | -\$232,083.74        |
| DEDICATED TO EMERGENT CONTAMINANTS<br>Per Senate Bill 105 (Not included in "Obligated to Contracts" above) |                                             |               | -\$165,920.99        |
| <b>EFFECTIVE (Unencumbered) CASH BALANCE</b>                                                               |                                             |               | <b>(\$75,965.17)</b> |

## **Summary**

The Bernard Allen Memorial Emergency Drinking Water Fund continues to be a valuable resource for qualifying residents in North Carolina at risk from contamination in their drinking water wells.

The fund's ability to pay for sampling and analysis of water supply wells and the provision of alternative drinking water supplies has been instrumental in helping the state respond to emergency drinking water situations. Monies are disbursed from the fund based on financial need and on the risk to public health posed by groundwater contamination. The fund's ability to provide bottled water to residents as a temporary water supply has also helped as a short-term solution, providing time for longer-term alternatives to be evaluated and implemented. Without this fund, the state has no resource to provide emergency temporary water supplies in many situations.

This year, the Program continued to experience unprecedented increased demands. Program expenses have risen due to an increase in sampling, bottled water provisions, point-of-use and point-of-entry treatment system installations, and reimbursements to homeowners for installation of treatment systems. Costs for these services have also increased exponentially since the Program's inception. The Program continues to sample a high number of private wells each year for both routine and emerging contaminants.

Future demands on the fund will increase as new contamination incidents are discovered and the extent of known contamination continues to be assessed, increasing the number of private wells needing to be tested statewide. In addition, sampling equipment, analytical costs, and costs to purchase and install alternate water systems continue to increase. These increases have depleted excess funds carried over from prior years and for the first time in program history there is a potential for a decrease in services provided and fewer samples collected by the Program in FY2025-26. An increase in appropriated revenue is critically necessary to allow the Program to perform necessary sampling and provide alternate water as prescribed in the statute.