



Plainfield and Algoma Townships, State of Michigan Reach Tentative \$69.5 Million Settlement Agreement with WWW in Federal PFAS Lawsuit

Plainfield and Algoma Townships, Michigan, December 10, 2019 – Plainfield and Algoma townships announced a tentative \$69.5 million settlement in the ongoing litigation brought by the state of Michigan against Wolverine Worldwide over its contamination of groundwater with the chemical family known as “PFAS.”

The tentative agreement ensures the Rockford shoemaker will pay \$69.5 million toward the extension of Plainfield Township’s municipal water system, enabling it to reach approximately 1,000 homes in Plainfield and Algoma townships as well as some funding for granular activated carbon, or GAC, filtering system for the plant.

Wolverine will pay all hookup and connection fees for homeowners whose private drinking wells are in the areas to be served by the new municipal lines. For certain homeowners not receiving municipal water, Wolverine will continue maintaining the water filters it has installed where the level of PFOA and PFOS is over 10 parts per trillion, or ppt.

The townships expect work will begin in spring 2020 and take at least five years to extend municipal water to all affected homeowners. Neighborhoods with the highest levels of contamination will be prioritized first, but some homes with little to no contamination may be connected before others based on the most efficient construction of the new water mains.

For a map of properties in the settlement agreement, along with answers to frequently asked questions, visit the Plainfield Township website, <https://plainfieldmi.org/>. Additional details of the settlement, including remediation plans for Wolverine’s former tannery site, can be found on We Are Wolverine, <https://wearewolverine.com/>.

In a joint statement, Plainfield Township Manager Cameron Van Wyngarden and Algoma Township Supervisor Kevin Green shared: “All parties have been working on this complicated settlement for a long time, and we appreciate the patience of residents who have been waiting more than two years for a resolution.

“Plainfield has already invested in developing plans for water main extensions and, assuming the settlement is finalized, will be ready to bid the projects after the first of the year so we can begin construction in 2020. We will be addressing priority areas first for those who have been most impacted in both townships.

“We also appreciate being able to reach a solution without having to go to trial, which will save taxpayers the time, and the uncertainties and expense of litigation.”

All parties have signed a term sheet that provides for an agreement in principle. It is still contingent on final preparation and approval of a detailed settlement agreement and the approval and signature of Judge Janet T. Neff of the U.S. District Court of the Western District of Michigan. This finalization is expected in the next several weeks at which time all settlement terms will become final and public.

Over the past two years, Plainfield Township invested more than \$500,000 to proactively work with the engineering firm Prein & Newhof in order to develop a detailed plan to extend municipal water. This foresight and planning enable the Township to send out construction bids for the initial projects in the first quarter of 2020 and begin work in the spring of that same year.

Once finalized, the settlement ends the legal dispute between all parties. Plainfield and Algoma townships entered the federal lawsuit in March 2018. Concerns with PFAS first surfaced broadly in August 2017 as citizens began identifying sites in Plainfield and Algoma townships where Wolverine's tannery waste may have been deposited. "PFAS" refers to a family of long-lasting chemicals used by Wolverine to waterproof its boots and shoes that have been linked to certain types of cancers and other health issues.

Wolverine voluntarily supplied more than 500 whole-house filters and more than 200 point-of-use filters to residents with high concentrations of PFAS in their well water. The settlement agreement assures Wolverine will continue to maintain these whole house filters until homeowners with property in the settlement area can be connected to municipal water.

###