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From: Arne [Carlson<govarne@gmail.com>](mailto:govarne@gmail.com)

Date: Wed, Mar 20, 2024 at 3:46 PM

Subject: Fwd: A call for leadership

To: Cunningham, Brooke (MDH) [<brooke.cunningham@state.mn.us>](mailto:brooke.cunningham@state.mn.us)

Dear Commissioner Cunningham,

As you well know, serious health issues involving the state's drinking water are rapidly increasing. Currently, 12 cities including Stillwater, Alexandria, Cloquet, Cottage Grove, Hastings, lake Elmo, Pease, St Paul Park, Sauk Rapids, Swanville, Waite Park, Bemidji and eight counties, Dodge, Fillmore, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Wabasha, and Winona are already adversely affected.

Further, you well know that the state's response to nitrate problems was so inadequate that the Federal Environmental Protection Agency was compelled to take control.

The recent revelation in the St Paul Pioneer Press (March 5, 2024) raises additional alarms that go well beyond a disorganized and poorly managed system. Just read the headline:

“ STILLWATER SAYS IT SHUT DOWN A CITY WELL MORE THAN A YEAR AGO AFTER DETECTING PFAS CONTAMINATION “

What is stunning is the incredible delay in informing the public that its water was contaminated. This goes well beyond careless management or an administrative snafu. People's lives were placed in danger by the deliberate inaction of their own government. Why was the public not fully informed when the first well was found to have contaminates that exceeded the state's standards? Further, why was there a delay between the finding of serious contamination and the closing of the well?

Even more distressing is this sentence from the Stillwater Gazette: “ Stillwater has eight wells, and well six is the affected well. It has been shutoff , only being put to use when demand outpaces what the other seven wells can supply.” Does this mean that the residents of Stillwater are still drinking contaminated water?

The public desperately needs a comprehensive water plan that fully protects our citizens today and into the future and they depend on the state's Commissioner of Health to be the bold, knowledgeable leader that forcefully speaks out against any threat to their health. We have far too many politicians who value money more than the public's well being.

If I can provide any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. Believe me, there is an army out there of concerned citizens who would welcome your courageous leadership.

My best,

Arne H. Carlson

Retired Governor of Minnesota