



The Rise of PFAS Drinking Water Class Actions in Canada: Insights for Environmental Professionals

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), often referred to as “forever chemicals,” have become a central concern in Canadian environmental and public health policy. As regulatory standards tighten and scientific understanding advances, communities affected by PFAS contamination—particularly through drinking water sourced from groundwater wells—are increasingly turning to class action litigation.

This presentation will provide environmental professionals with a clear overview of the evolving landscape of PFAS contamination stigma class actions in Canada, highlighting recent regulatory and litigation-related developments.

Key Developments

1. Rising Public Awareness

Public concern over PFAS has grown sharply due to increased federal government reporting, national media coverage, and new scientific findings about health risks. This heightened awareness is especially pronounced in communities near federal sites such as airports and military bases, where PFAS contamination of private wells is a significant risk. As a result, there has been a notable increase in legal claims by affected communities, particularly those seeking compensation for property value loss due to the stigma of PFAS contamination.

2. Recent Government Action

Federal regulatory activity accelerated between 2024 and 2025:

In August 2024, Health Canada set a new Drinking Water Objective of 30 ng/L for the sum of 25 PFAS compounds

In March 2025, the federal government released the Final State of PFAS Report, recommending that PFAS be added to Part 2 of Schedule 1 of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act and emphasizing that PFAS levels should be kept “as low as reasonably achievable” or “ALARA”

3. Growth in PFAS Contamination Stigma Class Action Litigation

PFAS class actions are on the rise across Canada, with communities seeking compensation for property devaluation linked to contamination stigma. The legal foundation for these claims is the 2002 decision in *Tridan Developments Ltd. v. Shell Canada Products Ltd.*, litigated by Michael S. Hebert of Mann Lawyers, which established that property devaluation due to contamination stigma is compensable.

Building on this precedent, Mann Lawyers LLP is leading Canada’s first and only certified PFAS class action. Environmental lawyers Michael S. Hebert and Nathan Adams represent residents of Mississippi Mills and North Bay, Ontario, who allege that PFAS contamination from nearby federal sites has entered their groundwater wells, resulting in drinking water contamination and a decline in property values in their respective communities due to the associated stigma.

Future Outlook

Mann Lawyers LLP will discuss recent developments in PFAS regulation and litigation in Canada, drawing on their direct experience with two key PFAS class action cases:

The certified Mississippi Mills PFAS Stigma Class Action (*Egan et al. v. National Research Council of Canada*)

The proposed CFB North Bay and Jack Garland Airport PFAS Stigma Class Action (*Sway & Currie v. the Attorney General of Canada and the Corporation of the City of North Bay*)

This presentation will equip environmental professionals with practical insights into the current and future landscape of PFAS-related litigation and regulation in Canada.

Nathan Adams Mann Lawyers LLP

Nathan Adams is an environmental litigator with a background in environmental science, specializing in contamination and property devaluation claims. As co-counsel on Ontario’s leading PFAS “forever chemicals” contamination stigma class actions, he represents property owners in Mississippi Mills and North Bay allegedly impacted by PFAS well water contamination from nearby PFAS-impacted sites. Nathan’s scientific expertise allows him to interpret evolving PFAS regulations and craft innovative legal strategies, placing him at the forefront of PFAS contamination stigma class action litigation in Canada. He serves on the Executive of the Ontario Bar Association’s Environmental Law Section, is a member

of the Ontario Environment Industry Association (ONEIA) PFAS Advocacy Committee, and frequently presents on PFAS litigation and regulatory issues.