



STAFF REPORT

DATE: 5/9/23

DISCUSSION

TO: City Council Workshop
FROM: Marty Powers, Director of Public Works
REVIEWED BY: Kristina Handt, City Administrator
AGENDA ITEM: Well #2

BACKGROUND:

The City of Lake Elmo currently has three wells on line that may be used year around. Well 2, 4 & 5 typically alternate in the off season, providing potable water and fire protection. All three city wells are in compliance with the current federal safe drinking water act requirements.

With the proposed future change in the PFAS maximum containment level (MCL), well #2 will likely be impacted based on recent sampling results. The predicted MCL for PFAS is expected to be 4 parts per trillion. Well #2's sample results are currently between 9 and 10 parts per trillion.

ISSUE BEFORE COUNCIL:

How does the council wish to proceed with using well #2 in the interim until new MCLs are adopted or MDH issues a health advisory? Should the city use well #2 as an emergency well only and change the irrigation restrictions so wells 4 & 5 can meet demands? Does Council wish to continue meeting current irrigation demands and blend the water from well #2 only in the summer months if allowed by MDH?

ANALYSIS:

During the past irrigation seasons, all three wells are ran at max capacity at the same time to keep up with early morning irrigation demands, provide potable drinking water and fire protection. Since the announcement of the potential change in the PFAS MCL earlier this year, well #2 has been taken out of the pumping rotation and is sitting idle as wells 4 & 5 are fully capable of meeting fall, winter and spring demands.

MDH indicated a weighted average could be used if well #2 was blended with wells 4 and 5. A pumping restriction from well #2 would be set by MDH to not exceed an established number of gallons per year.

If council wishes to keep well #2 offline, staff would recommend we look at a policy to limit properties to 2 days a week of lawn watering/irrigation and shortening the allowed length of watering new sod daily from 30 days to 15. Similar changes have been implemented by our neighbors.

OPTIONS:

If council would like to see the use of well #2 adjusted or the irrigation restrictions adjusted, please provide staff with direction on what changes are preferred so staff can bring the changes back to a council meeting for approval