

Staff Updates for Sustainability Commission, September 2025

Office of Sustainability and Innovation

- **Green Fair**, September 19, 5 – 8 PM | Main Street Ann Arbor: Join us for this annual event featuring 100 exhibitors advancing sustainable living with information about renewable energy, energy waste reduction, the circular economy, local food systems, environmental resources, green transportation, environmental advocacy and justice, urban forestry, and so much more! Learn more at a2gov.org/greenfair.
- **New Fiscal Year, New Energy Rebates!** As of July 1, 2025, all Home Energy Rebate categories are refreshed, meaning Ann Arbor households are eligible for up to \$25,000 in rebates! Learn more and finance your home energy improvements at osi.a2gov.org/rebates.
- **Green Rental Housing Ordinance** – Office of Sustainability and Innovations staff have been working for four years with community stakeholders to craft a new Green Rental Housing Ordinance. The Ordinance was passed by council in June 2025 and will help protect the health, safety, and well being of renters across the city. The team is preparing for program implementation this fall. To learn more, please see [the Green Rental Housing Ordinance](#) webpage.
- To help landlords and property managers understand the **Green Rental Housing Ordinance** and learn more about how to save money, stay compliant, and simplify planning, OSI and Rental Housing Services will be hosting educational webinars with time for questions and answers. The webinars will take place on Sept. 10 from 11 a.m. – noon and Sept. 30 from 1- 2 p.m. Anyone is welcome to attend, but registration is required. Registration information can be found at osi.a2gov.org/GreenRentalHousing. Can't make it? The sessions will be recorded and posted after.
- Thanks for playing the **Summer Games** with us! The A²ZERO Badges were awarded over FIVE THOUSAND times to this year's players!
- Moving to or in Ann Arbor for school? Want to save money, support local organizations and protect the environment? Buy your living and school supplies from one of the many places that sell gently used, good condition items. From Scrap Creative Reuse for things like notebooks, pencils, markers, and crafts, Kiwanis for furniture, organizers, lamps, appliances, bikes, and even mattresses, to Ann Arbor Thrift Shop for clothes, housewares, and linens, there are many organizations that can help you get settled as you move to Ann Arbor. You will be saving money and supporting the local community!

- **Household Preparedness Office Hours** | Sept 17, 10 AM – 5 PM | AADL Downtown
Need help getting started on crafting your preparedness plan? Join for a hands-on workshop to craft your household's Preparedness Plan during National Preparedness Month. Registration is required and space is limited. Participants will walk away with a household preparedness guide and basic emergency kit. Contact Willow Krupin (wkrupin@a2gov.org) with any questions.
- **Monthly Clothing Swap** | Sept 18, 4 – 7 PM, Council Chambers, City Hall: Join the Office of Sustainability and Innovations for monthly clothing swaps on the third Thursday of each month! These are a perfect way to give your gently used clothes a new home. And you might just find an item of clothing you have been looking for, without having to buy it new. Learn more and RSVP online at <https://luma.com/a2zeroclothingswaps>
- **OSI Park Workday** | Sept 26, 3 – 5 PM | Redwood Park: This work could include removing invasive plant species, litter pick-ups, planting native trees and gardens, maintaining garden beds, touching up faded murals, etc. Volunteers are welcome - come prepared to get dirty and make a difference! Close-toed shoes, long pants, and a refillable water bottle are recommended. Please email Sean Reynolds with questions (sreynolds@a2gov.org).
- **Cinema & Sustainability Series: The Lorax** | Sept 28, 1:30 PM | Michigan Theater
This FREE event will include the screening of The Lorax and a short post-screening discussion about the importance of trees in Ann Arbor! Reserve your free tickets for the Lorax and the rest of the series online at: marquee-arts.org/cinema-and-sustainability/

Public Services

- **Share input in the 2025 Ann Arbor Transportation Survey!** How do you get around Ann Arbor? What works well — and what doesn't? The [2025 Transportation Survey is now open](#), and your feedback will help shape the future of moving around the city. This annual survey supports Ann Arbor's Vision Zero goals to make the transportation system safer, more accessible and better for everyone. Your input will help track progress and guide improvements over the next four years. Survey closes Oct. 31, 2025.
- **Capital Improvements Plan:** The Fiscal Year 2026-2031 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) was approved by the Planning Commission on September 3, 2025. The Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) outlines a six-year schedule of public service expenditures for large, physical improvements that are permanent in nature, including the basic facilities, services, and installations needed for the community to function.

More information on the FY2026-2031 CIP can be found on the [Capital Improvements Plan](#) website.

- **Municipal Separate Stormsewer System Permit (MS4) permit finalized:** The City has a new MS4 Permit that went into effect on 9/1/2025. The new permit requirements are similar to the previous permit, but will require a new Industrial Stormwater Program be implemented by 9/1/26. The permit documents can be found on [MiEnviro](#).
- **Gelman 1,4 dioxane contamination updates:**
 - 2025 Residential well testing results are available: 117 residential wells in Scio Township were sampled this year, 47 of which had detectable levels of 1,4 dioxane between 0.2 and <3.0 parts per billion (ppb). The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) has stated that these levels are below Michigan's drinking water standard of 7.2 ppb, and also below the required action level of 3.0 ppb.
 - The results prompted [an inquiry](#) from Congresswoman Debbie Dingell's office
 - EGLE has responded to Congresswoman Dingell inquiry (Attachment A)
 - Slauson Middle School geothermal exploratory groundwater quality testing revealed detectable levels of dioxane: well sample depths varied, with dioxane concentrations ranging from 2 to 31 ppb. This area is within the known plume area. EGLE has noted that because this area is within the Prohibition Zone (where groundwater cannot be used for drinking water), these levels are well below the groundwater to surface water standard of 280 ppb. Results are viewable on the [EGLE RIDE mapper](#).
- **2025 Water Resource and Recovery Facility Open House!** Discover what happens after water goes down the drain with a behind-the-scenes look at how Ann Arbor treats and discharges all that water. Saturday, Sept. 20, 9 a.m.–noon at 49 S. Dixboro Road in Ann Arbor. Tours are free but space is limited. Tours run every 20 minutes, with the last tour beginning at 11:40 a.m. [Reserve to guarantee your tour spot](#) today!

Appendix A: EGLE Response to Congresswoman Debbie Dingell's Gelman Sciences Facility Inquiry



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY
EXECUTIVE OFFICE



PHILLIP D. ROOS
DIRECTOR

August 28, 2025

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Debbie Dingell
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Dingell:

SUBJECT: Gelman Sciences Facility Plume Impacts to the Huron River, Barton Pond,
and Residential Drinking Water Wells

Thank you for your letter of July 28, 2025, regarding the Gelman Sciences facility. The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) appreciates this opportunity to address your concerns. We share your commitment to protecting public health and the environment here in Michigan. Below are our responses to your questions, which have been addressed individually.

- What is EGLE's current assessment of the plume's location, rate of migration, and risks to private wells, the Huron River, and Barton Pond?

The main body of the contaminant plume is migrating easterly through the Prohibition Zone, towards the Huron River. The current understanding of the site indicates that the plume will vent to the Huron River south of the Argo Dam, which is approximately 1.25 miles downstream of Barton Pond. Gelman Sciences is required to monitor 1,4-dioxane (dioxane) concentrations in the area where venting is expected, and current data indicates that concentrations are in compliance with criteria promulgated under Part 201, Environmental Remediation, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended.

- What actions is EGLE taking to protect residents' drinking water and monitor further contamination?

EGLE, in cooperation with the Washtenaw County Health Department, administers an annual residential drinking water well sampling program. As part of the program, 206 residential drinking water wells were sampled in 2023 in Scio and Ann Arbor Townships; 153 residential drinking water wells were sampled in 2024; and 117 residential drinking water wells were sampled in 2025. None of the wells sampled had concentrations of dioxane that exceeded Michigan's drinking water criteria (7.2 parts per billion [ppb]) or that exceeded 3.0 ppb, which is the level at which the Fourth Amended Consent Judgment (CJ) requires Gelman Sciences to undertake

additional response activities to address the potential risk at a residential well before it reaches an unacceptable level in accordance with Part 201.

As your letter mentions, 47 of the residential drinking water wells sampled in 2025 had detectable levels of dioxane. This was not unexpected. As EGLE's sampling methods become more sensitive and capable of detecting dioxane at lower concentrations, EGLE anticipates that it will see more detections than it did in previous sampling events. This is not an indication that dioxane has migrated to previously uncontaminated areas. Instead, it is the result of the sampling method's ability to detect dioxane at lower concentrations.

Additionally, in 2021 and 2022 Gelman Sciences installed nine additional monitoring well clusters as required by the CJ. Three of these sentinel well clusters were placed along Sequoia Parkway, adding additional monitoring well coverage at the northern margin of the known plume boundary. Samples were obtained in the different aquifers during the drilling process to capture the vertical extent of contamination at these locations. The CJ requires that these wells be sampled quarterly. Thus far, the sampling has not detected dioxane in these wells. If detections above 7.2 ppb (Michigan's drinking water criteria for dioxane) are confirmed in these sentinel wells in the future, the CJ requires Gelman Sciences to initiate additional response activities to address those conditions.

EGLE is continuously reviewing the data received from residential well sampling, monitoring wells, and compliance sampling. The data currently available does not indicate that any residential drinking water wells are at risk of having dioxane contamination that exceeds Michigan's drinking water criteria. At present, there is no new information or unknown condition that would allow EGLE to seek additional response activities beyond those required by the CJ.

- Does EGLE plan to adopt the more sensitive EPA Method 522 (detection limit of 0.12 ppb) in future testing to ensure early detection?

EGLE does not intend to adopt United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Method 522. The analytical method used by EGLE's Laboratory is sensitive enough to detect dioxane in water well below Michigan's Part 201 criteria and all levels relevant to the CJ.

EGLE's State Environmental Laboratory measures dioxane using the Modified 8260 SIM method. In recent years, EGLE's Laboratory has twice reduced the reporting limit for the current method, first from 1 ppb to 0.5 ppb in 2023, then again in 2025 to 0.2 ppb. The most recent reporting limit is sensitive enough to reliably detect dioxane below the EPA's 0.35 ppb screening level. This reporting limit is also an order of magnitude more sensitive than Michigan's Part 201 criteria and any action levels contained in the CJ for the Gelman Sciences site.

- How will the state improve communication of health risks to residents, given that any detectable level of dioxane is classified by EPA as likely carcinogenic to humans?

EGLE works closely with both the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and the Washtenaw County Health Department to communicate health risks to the public. EGLE provides its partner agencies with a geographic information system tool that contains environmental contamination data that allows those agencies to communicate risks with individual homeowners. EGLE is committed to protecting human health and the environment and will continue to provide data to its partners to assist with communicating public health risks, while working to address environmental contamination within the framework of Michigan law.

EGLE understands that members of the public may be concerned that any detectable level of dioxane is likely carcinogenic. However, EGLE's authority to require response activities is derived from Part 201. Pursuant to Part 201, EGLE promulgated criteria for dioxane. Under Part 201, cleanup criteria for hazardous substances that pose a carcinogenic risk to humans is based on one additional cancer above the background cancer rate per 100,000 people. In contrast, the EPA's health advisory level uses one additional cancer above the background cancer rate per 10,000 people to establish its acceptable risk level. EGLE will consult with its public health partners to determine if additional communications to impacted homeowners is appropriate to further their understanding of the issue.

EGLE is dedicated to protecting human health and the environment consistent with its authority under Michigan's environmental laws. EGLE understands the public's desire to list the Gelman Sciences site as a Superfund Site, and EGLE has supported EPA's efforts to do so. In the interim, EGLE will continue to monitor Gelman Science's compliance with the CJ.

If you have additional questions regarding this matter, please contact Mike Neller, Director, Remediation and Redevelopment Division, at 517-512-5859; NellerM@Michigan.gov; or EGLE, P.O. Box 30426, Lansing, Michigan 48909-7926; or you may contact me.

Sincerely,



Phillip D. Roos
Director
517-284-6700

cc: Lee Zeldin, Administrator, EPA
Anne Vogel, Regional Administrator, EPA, Region 5
Aaron B. Keatley, Chief Deputy Director, EGLE
Sydney Hart, Legislative Liaison, EGLE
Gillian Gainsley, Chief of Staff, EGLE
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