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HORSHAM WATER AND
SEWER AUTHORITY

Air Force pays \$2.8M toward Willow Grove PFAS filter

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A joint project between the Horsham Air Guard Station and the Warminster Municipal Authority would install a capture and filtration system where the use of firefighting foams at military bases have left private and public wells shuttered since 2016.

The U.S. Air Force is paying \$2.8 million toward a permanent containment and filtration system for PFAS-contaminated surface water at the Horsham Air Guard Station.

U.S. Rep. Madeleine Dean, D-4, of Abington, announced the funding Friday, which will allow the station to partner with the Warminster Municipal Authority to install the system in the area contaminated by per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

Formerly the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Willow Grove, the site is one of three area active and former military bases linked to widespread drinking water contamination that shuttered hundreds of public and private wells in Horsham, Warrington and Warminster since 2016.

“For years, we have been deeply concerned by the ongoing contamination flowing from the Willow Grove base and into our region’s groundwater,” said Dean.

“Now, base leaders — including Colonel Griffin, who has partnered with us in this effort — have the funds they need to stop it.”

The news comes weeks after language ensuring safe drinking water for affected communities nationwide and placing cleanup liability squarely on those responsible was dropped from a military policy bill in Congress.

A news release from Dean's office states the funding was disbursed Thursday, after Dean had contacted the Air Force comptroller to approve the project.

The federal money comes months after Gov. Tom Wolf announced the state will provide \$3.8 million to support and offset the cost of water treatment efforts in the communities impacted by PFAS in Bucks and Montgomery counties.

PFAS chemicals were used for decades at the former Naval Air Station-Joint Reserve Base Willow Grove and Naval Air Warfare Center Warminster, resulting in the contamination of groundwater and streams in Warminster, Warrington, Horsham, and some surrounding towns.

Between 2014 and 2016, it was discovered that PFAS had contaminated about 15 public water wells in the three townships at some of the highest levels in the nation.