

Plaintiffs Reach \$12.5 Billion Settlement With 3M Over Water Pollution

Attorneys who tried the first PFAS case in the nation take aim at chemical giants for keeping the problem of contaminated water under wraps.

PENSACOLA, FL, UNITED STATES, June 23, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Levin Papantonio Rafferty (LPR) law firm announced talks with 3M Co., a defendant in the national litigation Aqueous Film-Forming Foams (AFFF) Products Liability Litigation MDL No. 2873, resulted yesterday in a \$12.5 billion settlement agreement with the chemical manufacturer.

3M will pay a minimum of \$10.5 billion and a maximum of \$12.5 billion to settle lawsuits over contamination of drinking water systems across the country with harmful per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Water providers will receive compensation to help fund water testing and infrastructure to immediately clean up drinking water supplies and fund ongoing maintenance to ensure drinking water safety. The settlement will be paid out over 13 years.

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*Mike Papantonio, Attorney,
Levin Papantonio Rafferty*



"3M's conduct has harmed Americans, and this settlement is a critical first step in preventing further harm," said LPR Attorney Wes Bowden, who serves on the Plaintiffs' Executive Committee in the national AFFF litigation.

LPR was serving as co-lead trial counsel along with Gary Douglas of the Douglas & London law firm for the first bellwether case (City of Stuart, Florida v. The 3M Company, et al. No. 2:2018cv03487) in the AFFF national litigation. The trial was set to begin June 5th, though advances in settlement discussions prompted Judge Richard Gergel, who is overseeing over [4,700](#) cases in the AFFF MDL, to continue the case for 21 days while the parties worked toward a resolution.

"The trial team was ready to show the world what 3M knew about their chemicals and kept secret from the public, regulators, and medical professionals alike for decades. 3M's conduct has harmed Americans and this settlement is a critical first step in preventing further harm," said LPR Attorney Wes Bowden, who serves on the Plaintiffs' Executive Committee in the national AFFF litigation.

"3M knowingly polluted the world with its cancer-causing chemicals that are now found in the blood of [98% of Americans](#)," Bowden said. "This settlement provides the critical funding needed to protect Americans and remove these toxic substances from our nation's drinking water."

AFFF, also known as firefighting foam, has been linked to various types of cancer, including kidney cancer, testicular cancer, pancreatic cancer, and prostate cancer. PFAS exist in the blood of most people in the U.S., according to the [Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry](#), making the matter of contaminated water supplies of paramount importance.

"The costs associated with remediation are tremendous," said LPR Attorney Ned McWilliams, who is a member of the Science and Discovery Committees in the AFFF MDL. "It's vital that municipalities know they can still join this litigation to recover their costs."

A pervasive harm went unchecked for too long:

LPR's involvement in PFAS originated six years ago when LPR Attorney Mike Papantonio, along with Attorneys Gary Douglas, and Rob Bilott, tried the first PFAS case (Tennant v. E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company, 2:13-cv-00334, (S.D. Ohio)).

Papantonio applauds the settlement and what it could mean for communities and public safety. At the same time, he shares his perspective on why the PFAS problem went unchecked and unreported for so long.

"Corporate media has allowed this to happen because they chose advertising money over the health of people all over America," Papantonio said. "This is the most silent, massive story never told by mainstream media.

"Even wire services have been unwilling to tell this story because when you follow the money, it all ties back to advertising dollars. But for social media and the work of attorneys like those who have sweat blood and tears over this litigation, this story would never have been told," Papantonio said.

Threat of jury trial forces settlement:

Douglas and Bowden were slated to begin jury selection and deliver opening arguments in Charleston, South Carolina, along with McWilliams.

Days prior to the City of Stuart trial, Dupont, Chemours, and Corteva, also Defendants in the national PFAS litigation, announced they agreed to pay \$1.185 billion in the first major settlement in MDL 2873, in which cities like Stuart allege that the Defendants' AFFF contaminated water supplies with harmful PFAS.

About the AFFF MDL:

As of June 15, 2023, over 4,700 actions are pending in the AFFF MDL and centralized in the U.S. District Court District of South Carolina for pretrial proceedings presided over by Judge Richard Gergel.

The AFFF MDL is a mass tort brought on behalf of water providers and other individuals who have been harmed by exposure to AFFF and/or required to incur cost associated with its remediation.

Defendants in the AFFF MDL include:

- * DuPont
- * 3M
- * BASF Corporation
- * Chemours
- * Corteva
- * Arkema
- * AGC Chemicals Americas
- * Dynax Corporation
- * Kidde-Fenwal Inc.
- * Clariant Corporation
- * UTC Fire & Security Americas Corporation
- * ChemDesign Products Inc.

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