

# Village of Hales Corners

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[www.halescorners.org](http://www.halescorners.org)



James R. Ryan Municipal Building

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April 14, 2025

Congressman Bryan Steil  
St. Francis Civic Center  
3400 E. Howard Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53235

Rick Zipperer

St. Francis Civic Center  
3400 E. Howard Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53235

Susie Liston

St. Francis Civic Center  
3400 E. Howard Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53235

Re: Village of Hales Corners request for assistance with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Dear Congressman Steil;

The Village of Hales Corners contacted you for assistance with an EPA interpretation of ownership and the hurdle it created to access Safe Drinking Water Loan (SDWL) funding for over 188 homes in Hales Corners. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regulates a water trust operating in the Village under the public water distribution system as the private trust serves more than 50 homes. The Hales Happiness Water Trust (Trust) submitted well tests which indicated PFA's and PFOA's in the water system that exceeded EPA levels and ultimately would exceed a proposed adoption of new standards in the State of Wisconsin for these forever chemicals. The DNR required notices to the affected homes of the contaminants found in the test back in August of 2023.

The Village has been working diligently since August of 2023 to address this public health hazard for our residents in conjunction with the DNR and the City of Milwaukee. The Village has an agreement with Milwaukee Water Works (MWW) which is owned by the City of Milwaukee that requires any new distribution system be connected to their network upon completion. The Village and its residents must pay for this asset and turn it over to the MWW and the City of Milwaukee upon completion. The issue became untenable when the Mayor of Milwaukee notified the Village in February, 2025, and at the 11th hour, that they refused to assist the Village in obtaining over \$3.5 million in SDWL funds even while the past 18 months the Village has been drafting agreements to ensure no cost to the City for their assistance. The EPA rule interpretation has been that the "owner" of any system can apply for funds. The issue is that the Trust owns it now, the Village is constructing it at the request of the Trust but the ultimate owner would be the City of Milwaukee. The owners in two instances would be temporary and the Trust could not apply for the funds as they ultimately will not own it either. The Village was ready to award a construction contract and begin remediating this health hazard when the City pulled out.

We contacted your office for assistance for assistance and representatives Rich Zipperer and Susie Liston, copied on this letter, met with the Village to offer assistance to resolve this matter on March 3, 2025.

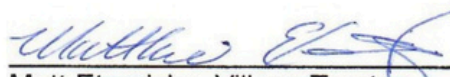
On March 5, 2025, Susie contacted the Village and advised that the DNR had advised them that the matter was resolved and it was confirmed by the Village on March 6, 2025, by the NDR that they have committed funding of up to \$3.5 million from the Other Than Municipal (OTM) funds and up to \$3 million in SDWL funding with no need to involve the City of Milwaukee. Without your support and working on our behalf, this would never have been accomplished. This is life changing for the 188 homes and approximately 750 residents that are affected. This will result in savings to the home owners of 50% of the project costs and an estimated \$16,000 in special assessments which could have been \$30,000 to \$35,000 per home (nearly 18% of their homes value).


On behalf of the residents and the Village of Hales Corners, we thank you and your staff for your immediate response to assist with this matter. We have no doubt, that without your support and assistance, we would not have had this outcome. This is the essence of what cooperation can do to change the lives of citizens.

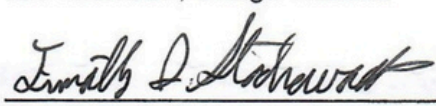
Respectfully,


  
Dan Besson, Village President


  
Todd Brinkmeier, Village Trustee

  
Matt Eternicka, Village Trustee

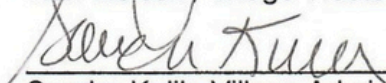
  
Ian Thomson, Village Trustee

  
Tim Stachowiak, Hales Happiness Water Trustee

  
Mary Bennett, Village Trustee

  
Jeff Chesney, Village Trustee

  
Ken Meleski, Village Trustee

  
Sandra Kulik, Village Administrator