

Rockford PFAS Update & Community Conversation

September 24, 2026 • 6:30–9:00 PM Rockford High School Auditorium

Event Description

This two-hour community forum brings residents, scientists, health experts, and local leaders together for a detailed update on PFAS contamination connected to the Wolverine sites. The evening combines clear, accessible presentations with personal stories and open conversation. Attendees will learn about the latest science, ongoing cleanup efforts, health guidance, and opportunities for community involvement.

Expanded Purpose

This event aims to inform, empower, and connect the Rockford community. PFAS contamination has touched families, neighborhoods, and ecosystems across northern Kent County, and residents deserve transparent updates and meaningful avenues for action. This gathering aims to:

- Provide clear, science-based updates on PFAS chemistry, environmental behavior, and regulatory changes.
- Share current information on Wolverine Worldwide sites, cleanup progress, and future milestones.
- Offer public health guidance, including Eat Safe Fish advisories, exposure pathways, and ongoing health studies.
- Highlight personal experiences to ground the science in lived reality and strengthen community solidarity.
- Connect residents to local, state, and nonprofit resources for testing, health support, and environmental information.
- Encourage community advocacy, including participation in the Community Advisory Group (CAG) and constructive engagement with local officials, businesses, and policymakers.
- Build a shared understanding that PFAS stewardship—reducing exposure, supporting cleanup, and advocating for safer practices is a long-term community responsibility.

Event Goals

By the end of the evening, attendees should:

- Understand the current status of PFAS contamination and cleanup efforts.
- Know where to find trusted information and practical guidance for protecting their families.
- Feel connected to a supportive community network of residents, scientists, and public agencies.
- Leave with specific actions they can take—joining the CAG, contacting officials, supporting PFAS-safe business practices, and staying informed.

- Recognize that community stewardship is essential: PFAS contamination is a long-term challenge, and sustained public engagement strengthens accountability, transparency, and progress.

Event Format

6:00 – 6:30. Meet and Greet. MDHHS and the CAG will have tables in the foyer. Michael Shibler will be at a table at the entrance. CAG members will collect questions from the attendees as needed.

First Hour: Presentations 6:30-7:30

Opening Remarks – Michael Shibler

15-minute updates from each speaker:

- Rick Rediske – PFAS chemistry, environmental behavior, and regulatory developments
- Karen Vorce – Wolverine Worldwide sites: progress, challenges, and upcoming milestones
- Joost Vant Erve – Public health studies, exposure pathways, and Eat Safe Fish guidance
- Tobyn McNaughton – Personal story, community reflections, and lived experience

Second Hour: Speaker Q&A 7:30 – 8-30.

A moderated conversation with all speakers. Questions may be submitted in advance, or shared through an open-mic format. Each speaker begins with a brief 2–3 minute reflection before the Q&A begins. CAG members will be at each microphone.

Closing Remarks – Michael Shibler

Time for individual questions and viewing the MDHHS materials.