

CLASS ACTION NOTICE

THIRD CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT NOTICE

***Parris v. 3M Company*, No. 4:21-CV-00040-TWT
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
ROME DIVISION**

If you have used and paid for water provided by the City of Summerville, Georgia, during the period January 1, 2020, to March 5, 2025, your rights may be affected by a proposed partial class action settlement.

A federal court authorized this notice. This is not a solicitation from a lawyer.

This third proposed Class Action Settlement (“Settlement”) provides for two additional Defendants, Mount Vernon Mills, Inc., and the Town of Trion, Georgia, to contribute to the Temporary Drinking Water Fund which will be used to provide temporary drinking water for members of the Class of Summerville water users who elect to receive it. You will have a choice of either delivery of bottled water or installation of a point-of-use filter in your home or business. You will not receive any direct payment as part of this Settlement.

The Court in charge of this case must conduct a hearing to decide whether to approve the third proposed Settlement. The Temporary Drinking Water Fund will not be established until the Court approves the first (Pulcra Chemicals, LLC) Settlement and it becomes fully effective by its terms, and the time for all appeals has expired. The contributions of Mount Vernon Mills and Trion will occur after this third proposed Settlement is approved and the time for all appeals has expired.

Your legal rights and options – and the deadlines to exercise them – are explained in this notice. Your rights are affected whether you act or don’t act. Please read this notice carefully.

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BASIC INFORMATION

1. Why did I get this notice package?

You have received this Third Notice of Class Action Settlement (“Settlement”) because you have been identified as a potential member of the class on whose behalf claims will be settled, if the Court approves the third proposed Settlement. The case involved in this proposed Settlement is *Parris v. 3M Company*, No. 4:21-CV-00040-TWT. The Court in charge of this case is the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, Rome Division, the Honorable Thomas W. Thrash, Jr., presiding. The person who sued is called the Plaintiff, and the companies and government entities sued are called the Defendants.

The claims in the case are described in greater detail in Paragraph 2, below. The people who are eligible to obtain temporary drinking water under the proposed Partial Settlement (“the Class Members”) are all account holders and all ratepayers of water and/or sewer service with the City of Summerville, Georgia, during the period January 1, 2020 to March 5, 2025.

The Court approved this notice being sent to you because you have a right to know about the proposed Partial Settlement of this class action lawsuit, and about your opportunity to object, before the Court decides whether to approve the third Partial Settlement. If the Court approves the proposed Partial Settlement, and after any objections and appeals are resolved, the parties will proceed to fulfill their obligations in accordance with the terms of the third Partial Settlement Agreement.

2. What is this lawsuit about?

The City of Summerville, Georgia, draws water for drinking water from Raccoon Creek and, after treatment, provides it to water users (Class Members) inside and outside the City who pay a monthly water bill. This case arises from the release of per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (“PFAS”), including perfluorooctanoic acid (“PFOA”) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (“PFOS”), into Raccoon Creek from farm fields upstream of Summerville where sewage sludge from the Town of Trion, Georgia, wastewater treatment plant was applied to the land as fertilizer. As alleged in the lawsuit, that sludge contained PFAS from the use of PFAS-containing products sold by some of the Defendants to a textile mill in Trion to make fabric release stains more easily. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) considers PFOA and PFOS potentially harmful to human health at very low concentrations and set a Maximum Contaminant Limit (“MCL”) of 4 parts per trillion in drinking water, which water providers, like Summerville, will be required to meet by 2029.

The City of Summerville installed a temporary treatment system at its drinking water treatment plant to address PFAS, but this system is not capable of consistently removing PFOA and PFOS below the MCL. In 2021 Class Counsel filed an individual and class action lawsuit on behalf of Plaintiff Earl Parris, Jr., against Defendants 3M Company, Daikin America, Inc., E.I. Du Pont De Nemours and Company, Huntsman International LLC, Pulcra Chemicals, LLC, Mount Vernon Mills, Inc., The Chemours Company, and The Town of Trion, Georgia, alleging that their actions have impacted and continue to impact Raccoon Creek and the Summerville drinking water. The

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City of Summerville has joined this lawsuit which ultimately seeks a new permanent water treatment system to remove PFAS and also seeks to force certain Defendants to pay Class Members for the extra water fees they paid for the temporary PFAS removal system and other expenses incurred by Summerville and paid by the water rate payers (Class Members) due to the PFAS contamination. The Court filings setting forth the Plaintiffs' claims against the Defendants may be viewed at www.summervilleclasssettlement.com. That website also contains other relevant filings in this case.

The Class Representative and Mount Vernon Mills and Trion have reached an agreement to resolve this matter as to these two Defendants, resulting in the third proposed Class Action Settlement. Previously, the Class Representative entered into an agreement with Pulcra Chemicals, LLC, which is set for a Final Approval Hearing on April 23, 2025. Mount Vernon Mills and Trion deny the allegations in this lawsuit and specifically deny and dispute the factual, scientific, medical, or other bases asserted in support of Plaintiff's claims, including the demand for a temporary drinking water supply.

The case and all pending class claims will proceed against all remaining Defendants other than the Defendants that have agreed in settlement to fund the Temporary Drinking Water Fund.

3. Why is this case a class action?

In a class action, Mr. Parris, called a Class Representative, has sued on behalf of people who have similar claims. All the people represented by the Class Representative are a "Class" or "Class Members." One Court presides over the class-wide claims the Court determines should be addressed in one proceeding for all Class Members.

On March 5, 2025, U.S. District Judge Thomas W. Thrash, Jr., conditionally certified the Settlement Class for purposes of a Class Settlement.

4. Why is there a Settlement?

The Court did not decide in favor of the Class Representative or Mount Vernon Mills and Trion in this case. The Class Representative, with the advice of Class Counsel, and Mount Vernon Mills and Trion have agreed to the terms of this Settlement to avoid the cost, delay and uncertainty that would come with additional litigation and trial. After considering, the Class Representative and Class Counsel think the Settlement with Mount Vernon Mills and Trion is best for Class Members because it provides certain relief now in the form of temporary drinking water. Under the settlement, all class claims in the case against Mount Vernon Mills and Trion will be dismissed with prejudice. The agreement to settle is not an admission of fault by Mount Vernon Mills and Trion. Mount Vernon Mills and Trion specifically dispute the claims asserted in this case and the need for any relief. The claims against the defendants who have not settled remain pending.

WHO IS IN THE PARTIAL CLASS SETTLEMENT

In order to be included in this Settlement, you must be a Class Member.

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5. How do I know if I am part of the Partial Settlement?

Judge Thrash has conditionally certified a class which includes everyone who fits the following description:

All account holders and all ratepayers of water and/or sewer service with the City of Summerville, Georgia from January 1, 2020 to the time of approval of this Settlement, including but not limited to residential, commercial, and industrial ratepayers, and including all adult individuals who reside at a residence that receives water or sewer service from the City of Summerville.

Because you have received this Notice of Class Action Settlement, you may be a member of the class described above.

6. Which Defendants are included?

Mount Vernon Mills and Trion are the only Defendants included in this proposed Third Settlement Agreement. The class action lawsuit will continue against Defendants 3M Company, Daikin America, Inc., E.I. Du Pont De Nemours and Company, and The Chemours Company. The City of Summerville and the Class Representative are seeking additional relief against these Defendants which, if granted, would benefit Class Members.

THE SETTLEMENT BENEFITS

7. What does the Partial Settlement provide?

The Partial Settlement provides for benefits to the Class Members to resolve the Class Claims against Mount Vernon Mills and Trion. Specifically, the Partial Settlement provides for additional funding of a Temporary Drinking Water Fund to pay for either the delivery of bottled water or the installation of a point-of-use filter for every Class Member who requests this benefit. The purpose of the Fund is to provide temporary drinking water to Class Members until the City of Summerville has funded, designed, and constructed a new permanent drinking water treatment system based on a Granular Activated Carbon System to treat the water supply to PFAS levels below the EPA Drinking Water MCLs. Depending on the participation of Class Members, the Fund may be exhausted before the new treatment system is operating. If the Class settles with any additional Defendants for temporary drinking water before trial, the intent is to replenish the Fund.

Mount Vernon Mills and Trion will fund the Temporary Drinking Water Fund with a payment of Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000). From this payment, Class Counsel can request up to One Hundred Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000) in attorney fees and litigation and administrative expenses, subject to approval by the Court. At least \$375,000 would be used for providing temporary drinking water to Class Members.

After several years of extensive litigation, Mr. Parris and Class Counsel have had the opportunity to thoroughly evaluate the likelihood of the class claims against Mount Vernon Mills and Trion succeeding on the merits if there is not a settlement and the risks of continuing with the litigation

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against these Defendants. Mount Vernon Mills and Trion have raised substantial defenses concerning the merits of the claims. Without a settlement, Mount Vernon Mills and Trion would continue to press those defenses, leading to costs, risks of delay, and a risk of losing either in the trial court or on appeal. Further, even if the case were to ultimately succeed against Mount Vernon Mills and Trion, the proportion of any award that Mount Vernon Mills and Trion might be responsible for, compared to the other remaining Defendants, is uncertain. With the settlement, Class Members avoid these risks and can receive meaningful benefits without delay while the case proceeds against the other Defendants. In light of these factors, Mr. Parris and Class Counsel have concluded the Third Settlement Agreement is fair, adequate, and reasonable.

Once the Court enters final approval, this Partial Settlement provides that Class Members, in exchange for these class benefits, will release and agree not to sue Mount Vernon Mills and Trion for any of the state law class claims associated with the Class Complaint. The Class Complaint claims primarily seek relief for alleged harms associated with supply, use, and disposal of PFAS-containing products at the Mount Vernon Mills facility in Trion, Georgia, and the land application of sludge by the Trion. The Class Complaint does not claim damages for any manifest personal injury, and the release and agreement not to sue will not cover alleged personal injuries and illnesses, if any. Mount Vernon Mills and Trion reserve all their defenses as to such claims. This Third Settlement Agreement also will not release any pending claims by Mr. Parris in his individual capacity against Mount Vernon Mills and Trion for violations of the federal Clean Water Act or the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

Mount Vernon Mills and Trion will not participate in the administration of the Temporary Drinking Water Fund or the distribution of the drinking water. If you have questions about the Fund, please do not contact Mount Vernon Mills or Trion.

8. What do I have to do to receive class benefits?

Once the Court approves the first Partial Settlement with Pulcra and it becomes effective by its terms, and the time for appeals expires or all appeals are resolved, the Temporary Drinking Water Fund will be established. At that time, you may request to participate in the Settlement by contacting the Settlement Administrator and showing proof that you are an eligible Class Member and by selecting the method by which you want to receive temporary drinking water. Once the Court approves the Third Settlement Agreement with Mount Vernon Mills and Trion and it becomes effective by its terms and the time for appeals expires or all appeals are resolved, the payment will be made by Mount Vernon Mills and Trion to the Temporary Drinking Water Fund, and the Fund will continue to provide temporary drinking water to those who are eligible as long as funds remain.

THE LAWYERS REPRESENTING YOU

9. Do I have a lawyer in this case?

The Court approved the law firms of Davis, Johnston, & Ringger, PC, and the Causby Firm, LLC, to represent you and other Class Members. You will not be charged for these lawyers. If you want to be represented by your own lawyer, you may hire one at your own expense.

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10. How will the lawyers be paid?

As part of the final approval of this Settlement, Class Counsel will ask the Court to approve payment of their reasonable attorneys' fees and expenses, not to exceed \$125,000, related to their work in this case for achieving this Settlement. Class Counsel will make their request for Attorneys' Fees and Expenses through a motion that will be filed with the Court prior to date of the Fairness Hearing and prior to the deadline for Class Members to file their Objections. That motion will be made available at www.summervilleclasssettlement.com.

The Court will determine whether the payments and the specific amounts requested at that time are appropriate. These amounts will come out of the Settlement Amount. Mount Vernon Mills and Trion do not oppose this request for fees and expenses.

OBJECTING TO THE SETTLEMENT

11. How do I tell the Court if I don't like the Settlement?

If you are a Class Member, you can object to the Settlement if you don't like any part of it. The Court will consider your views. To object, you must send a letter saying that you object to the *Parris v. Mount Vernon Mills, Inc., and Town of Trion, Georgia* Partial Settlement, and you must specifically state your objections, including whatever legal authority, if any, you are relying on regarding the objections. You must include your name, address, telephone number, and your signature; indicate whether you are a current or former employee, agent, or contractor of Mount Vernon Mills and Trion or Class Counsel; and provide a detailed statement of the reasons (legal and factual) why you object to the Partial Settlement. Mail the objection to the three places listed below, **postmarked no later than April 7, 2025**:

Clerk of Court:

Kevin P. Weimer, Clerk of Court
Re: Parris v. 3M Company, et al., No. 4:21-cv-00040-TWT
United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia
Richard B. Russell Federal Building & United States Courthouse
2211 United States Courthouse
75 Ted Turner Drive, SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-3309

Class counsel:

Gary A. Davis
Davis, Johnston, & Ringger, PC
21 Battery Park Avenue, Suite 206
Asheville, NC 28801

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Mount Vernon Mills, Inc. Counsel:

William M. Droze
T. Matthew Bailey
Kadeisha A. West
Troutman Pepper Locke, LLP
600 Peachtree Street, N.E. Suite 3000
Atlanta, GA 30308

Town of Trion, Georgia Counsel:

Thomas Hiley
Kassandra Garrison
Erich Nathe
GORDON REES SCULLY
MANSUKHANI, LLP
55 Ivan Allen Junior Blvd., NW, Suite 750
Atlanta, GA 30308

THE COURT'S FAIRNESS HEARING

12. When and where will the Court decide whether to approve the Settlement?

The Court will hold a Fairness Hearing at **June 11, 2025 at 10:00 AM, at the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, Atlanta Division.** At this hearing the Court will consider whether the Settlement is fair, reasonable, and adequate. If there are objections, the Court will consider them. The Court may also address Class Counsels' Motion for Attorney Fees and Expenses. After the hearing, the Court will decide whether to approve the Settlement. We do not know how long these decisions will take.

13. Do I have to come to the hearing?

You do not have to come to the Fairness Hearing. Class Counsel will answer questions Judge Thrash may have, but you are welcome to come at your own expense. If you send an objection, you do not have to come to Court to talk about it. As long as you mailed your written objection on time, the Court will consider it. You may also pay your own lawyer to attend, but it is not necessary.

14. May I speak at the hearing?

You may ask the Court for permission to speak at the Fairness Hearing. To do so, you must send a letter saying that it is your "Notice of Intention to Appear in the Fairness Hearing for the *Parris v. Mount Vernon Mills, Inc. and Town of Trion, Georgia* Settlement." Be sure to include your name, address, telephone number, and your signature. Your "Notice of Intention to Appear" must be postmarked no later than May 27, 2025, and must be sent to the three addresses listed in the "Objecting to the Partial Settlement" section of this Notice.

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IF YOU DO NOTHING

15. What happens if I do nothing at all?

If you do nothing at all and the Settlement is approved, becomes effective, and is not successfully appealed, you will be eligible to receive the temporary drinking water for free for as long as the Temporary Drinking Water Fund lasts, and you will be bound by the release of Mount Vernon Mills and Trion as Defendants in the lawsuit. The other Defendants will remain in the lawsuit, and you may receive additional relief from them in the future. Under the proposed Settlement, you will not have the right to request exclusion from the class action.

GETTING MORE INFORMATION

16. How do I get more information?

DO NOT CALL the Court or Mount Vernon Mills or Trion with questions about this Partial Settlement. If you have questions about this Partial Settlement, you should contact Class Counsel or the Settlement Administrator at:

Class Counsel:
Gary A. Davis
Davis, Johnston, & Ringger, PC
21 Battery Park Avenue, Suite 206
Asheville, NC 28801
(828) 622-0044

Settlement Administrator:
Edgar C. Gentle, III
Gentle, Turner, and Benson, LLC
501 Riverchase Parkway East
Suite 100
Hoover, Alabama 35244
(855) 711-2079

Additional information and documents pertaining to the Partial Settlement can be found by visiting the website www.summervilleclasssettlement.com.