To: Diamond, Jane[Diamond.Jane@epa.gov]
From: Zito, Kelly
Sent: Fri 3/6/2015 10:39:35 PM
Subject: FW: Request for correction

From: Zito, Kelly
Sent: Friday, March 06, 2015 11:36 AM
To: 'Barnum, Alex@EPA'; Schilling, Teresa@DOC
Subject: RE: Request for correction

Thanks for letting us know.

Have a good weekend-

Kelly

From: Barnum, Alex@EPA [mailto:Alex.Barnum@calepa.ca.gov]
Sent: Friday, March 06, 2015 11:27 AM
To: Zito, Kelly; Schilling, Teresa@DOC
Subject: FW: Request for correction

Kelly and Teresa,

After some back and forth, NBC Bay Area removed the most egregious errors from their web story. See link below. Of course, this doesn't undo the damage done in their original broadcast, but it may make them a little more careful next time. We'll see...

http://www.nbcbayarea.com/investigations/State-Admits-That-Thousands-of-Oil-Wells-Are-Dumping-into-Protected-Aquifers-294931661.html

Thanks,

Alex

From: Adrouny, Stephanie (NBCUniversal) [stephanie.adrouny@nbcuni.com]
Sent: Friday, March 06, 2015 10:52 AM
To: Barnum, Alex@EPA
Subject: RE: Request for correction

Dear Alex,

Thank you for your email. I have discussed your concerns with both Stephen Stock and Liza Meak. We have made a few adjustments to our online story to clarify some of the points we made. We feel our story is true and accurate and we stand by our work.

Best,

Stephanie Adrouny

Assistant News Director

NBC Bay Area

From: Barnum, Alex@EPA [mailto:Alex.Barnum@calepa.ca.gov]
Sent: Thursday, March 05, 2015 10:57 AM
To: Adrouny, Stephanie (NBCUniversal)
Subject: RE: Request for correction

Dear Stephanie,

I appreciate your station's efforts to cover this important story. However, I'm concerned that the latest piece was inaccurate. The story's implication was that the number of wells known to be injecting into "non-exempt" aquifers jumped from 532 in February to 2,500 this month. As I've tried to explain in the original email below, this is not the case. The numbers reported by DOGGR and the State Water Board in their Feb. 6 letter to the US EPA, which presumably was the basis of your Feb. 5 story, have not changed.

The other problem with the story is that it doesn't distinguish between these 2,500 wells -- the vast majority of which are injecting into existing oil fields (not "clean aquifers" as the story states) that are not suitable as a source of water for drinking and agriculture -- and the 176 wells that the state has prioritized for review. These wells are the ones that are injecting into zones with higher water quality (under 3,000 mg/l total dissolved solids) and may pose a risk to nearby water supply wells.

Please don't interpret my request for a correction as defending or minimizing these practices. We take this problem very seriously. The CalEPA review cited in your story was done in an effort to better understand how these practices were allowed to develop over 30 years, and the findings will inform our actions to correct the problem. I just think the public and your viewers are better served when the facts are reported correctly.

Thanks for your consideration, and please let me know if you have questions.

Regards,

Alex

Alex Barnum

Deputy Secretary for Communications and External Affairs

California Environmental Protection Agency

1001 I Street, 25th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814

Ph: (916) 324-9670 | Fx: (916) 324-0908

alex.barnum@calepa.ca.gov

From: Meak, Liza (NBCUniversal, KNTV) [mailto:Liza.Meak@nbcuni.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 05, 2015 9:34 AM

To: Barnum, Alex@EPA
Cc: Adrouny, Stephanie (NBCUniversal)
Subject: RE: Request for correction

Hi Alex,

We still stand by our story, but I've cc'd Stephanie Adrouny to this email. She's NBC Bay Area's Assistant News Director. Feel free to contact her with any other concerns.

Thanks,

Liza

From: Barnum, Alex@EPA [mailto:Alex.Barnum@calepa.ca.gov]
Sent: Thursday, March 05, 2015 8:15 AM
To: Meak, Liza (NBCUniversal, KNTV)
Subject: RE: Request for correction

Liza,

So we disagree. Is there someone to whom I can appeal? Someone who handles corrections?

Thanks,

Alex

From: Meak, Liza (NBCUniversal, KNTV) [Liza.Meak@nbcuni.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2015 7:09 PM
To: Barnum, Alex@EPA
Subject: Re: Request for correction

I disagree that it's inaccurate. If you click on the link, you'll see it refers to the story we did on the Federal EPA deadline, which came out before DOGGR's letter was released later in February.

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 4, 2015, at 6:39 PM, Barnum, Alex@EPA <Alex.Barnum@calepa.ca.gov> wrote:

That still implies that the number has increased when it hasn't. And later the story makes the statement below which furthers the inaccuracy. The story is still wrong.

At that time only nine wells were known to be dumping into clean aquifers. By February, that number would climb to 532, and now, 2,500.

From: Meak, Liza (NBCUniversal, KNTV) [Liza.Meak@nbcuni.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2015 6:18 PM
To: Barnum, Alex@EPA
Subject: RE: Request for correction

Here you go.

In February, California's Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) admitted that more than 500 wells were injecting waste into clean aquifers protected by the EPA. The Investigative Unit has since learned that DOGGR has identified 2,500 wastewater disposal wells that are injecting waste into protected aquifers. The state EPA released a memo on March 3rd confirming the findings.

From: Barnum, Alex@EPA [mailto:Alex.Barnum@calepa.ca.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2015 5:57 PM
To: Meak, Liza (NBCUniversal, KNTV)
Subject: RE: Request for correction

Hi Liza,

I'm not seeing that anything changed. Can you tell me what you did?

Thanks,

Alex

From: Meak, Liza (NBCUniversal, KNTV) [Liza.Meak@nbcuni.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2015 5:12 PM
To: Barnum, Alex@EPA
Subject: RE: Request for correction

Hi Alex,

We updated the script on our web site.

Feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Liza

From: Barnum, Alex@EPA [mailto:Alex.Barnum@calepa.ca.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2015 2:35 PM
To: Meak, Liza (NBCUniversal, KNTV)
Subject: Request for correction

Liza,

Thanks for considering my request for a correction to NBC Bay Area's story today about the CalEPA report on underground injection wells. As I mentioned on the phone, the 2,500 underground injection wells cited in the CalEPA memo and in DOGGR's press release yesterday do not represent an increase from the number that DOGGR cited in its Feb. 6 letter to the U.S. EPA.

Your story is correct in that DOGGR has identified 2,553 wells that are injecting into non-exempt zones. Of these, 2021 are injecting waste water into hydrocarbon-bearing zones for the purpose of "enhanced oil recovery" – ie back into the wells from which it came to get more oil out of the ground. As DOGGR prioritizes its review, these wells are lower priority because the zones they're injecting into already contain oil and gas and may qualify for exemption by US EPA.

The remaining 532 injection wells are injecting waste water into zones that don't contain hydrocarbons, for the purpose of disposal of the waste water. Of these, 176 wells are injecting into aquifers with total dissolved solids (TDS) of less than 3,000 milligrams per liter, a key measure of higher water quality. These are the ones that pose a potential risk to nearby drinking water and therefore are the highest priority for DOGGR's review.

Again, these numbers haven't changed since Feb. 6, when DOGGR and the State Water Board sent their letter to US EPA. To confirm, you can look at tables in Appendix B (pg. 28) of the Feb. 6 letter:
ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/oil/UIC%20Files/FINAL_Dual%20Letterhead_US%20EPA%20Letter.pdf

I appreciate your taking a look at this and considering my request for a correction. Please let me know if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Alex

Alex Barnum

Deputy Secretary for Communications and External Affairs

California Environmental Protection Agency

1001 I Street, 25th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814

Ph: (916) 324-9670 | Fx: (916) 324-0908

alex.barnum@calepa.ca.gov