NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. | Department of Environmental Conservation | Department of Health

January 14, 2016

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
USEPA Headquarters
William Jefferson Clinton Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W.
Mail Code: 1101A
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

We write to you to request that EPA take vigorous action to address the presence of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) in drinking water and groundwater. Respectfully, we ask that EPA:

- lower its provisional health advisory of 400 parts per trillion (ppt) for PFOA drinking water to take into account the most current scientific evidence;
- act expeditiously to adopt a protective maximum contaminant level for PFOA;
- expeditiously list PFOA as a hazardous substance under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) to facilitate the cleanup of contaminated groundwater and other media; and
- review the remaining uses of PFOA under the Toxic Substances Control Act and curtail it whenever less toxic alternatives are available.

The New York State Department of Health has been working with the Village of Hoosick Falls and the Town of Hoosick for more than a year to address PFOA contamination of drinking water. PFOA in the Village of Hoosick Falls public water supply exceeds the provisional EPA health advisory of 400 ppt. Private wells in the Town of Hoosick have also shown signs of contamination, but at lower levels than in the municipal supply. The Department of Health, the Village, and Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics have collaborated to evaluate treatment options for the Village water supply, implement a bottled water program, and design and order a temporary treatment system to be installed in the coming weeks on the Village water supply. This temporary treatment system will remain in place until a planned permanent treatment system is operational later this year.

We write to you because this is not just a local issue. The presence of PFOA in drinking water is an emerging nation-wide issue.

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As reported in the New York Times Magazine on January 10, 2016, several studies have asserted that the presence of PFOA in drinking water and groundwater may be more pervasive than originally thought and may subject people across the country to PFOA exposure since EPA first began working on this issue in 2001.

It is imperative that the federal government step forward and use the authority it already holds under federal law to comprehensively address this national issue. The State of New York stands ready to assist EPA in any way we can in this important effort to protect public health and the environment from PFOA.

Sincerely,

Howard Zucker M.D.

Dr. Howard Zucker
Commissioner
DOH

Basil Seggos
Acting Commissioner
DEC