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Sent: Wed 1/27/2016 11:44:24 PM
Subject: Fwd: GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES IMMEDIATE STATE ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS CONTAMINATION IN HOOSICK FALLS

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For Immediate Release: 1/27/2016 **GOVERNOR ANDREW M. CUOMO**

GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES IMMEDIATE STATE ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS CONTAMINATION IN HOOSICK FALLS

Emergency regulation issued to classify PFOA as a hazardous substance; Saint-Gobain facility to be classified as a State Superfund Site to unlock state resources and legal remedy to address contamination

State will conduct Health Risk Analysis to establish PFOA drinking water guidance level; retest private wells in the village of Hoosick Falls; and immediately install filtration systems at school and other community gathering places

State hotline (1-800-801-8092) established to help public stay informed

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced a series of immediate actions by New York State to address contamination in the Village of Hoosick Falls' water supply and at the Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics Site. These announcements follow today's meeting between the Governor and senior state and local officials.

"We are taking immediate and aggressive actions to protect the health of Hoosick Falls residents," **said Governor Cuomo.** "These actions will ensure that the source and extent of PFOA contamination is identified, and all necessary steps are taken to swiftly address the chemical's presence. My administration is investigating this situation fully, and we will do whatever is necessary to ensure safe, clean drinking water for local residents."

These actions include to:

• **Issue Emergency Regulation to Classify PFOA as Hazardous Substance:** The state Department of Environmental Conservation today issued an emergency regulation to classify Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), the contaminant found in the Village's water supply, as a hazardous substance. This provides DEC with the legal authority to pursue State Superfund designation and cleanup of the site using State Superfund resources.

• **Classify Saint-Gobain Facility as a State Superfund Site to Unlock State Resources to Address Contamination:** Further, the state announced it will classify the Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics Corporation McCaffrey Street Plant and other possible sources of contamination that may be identified in Hoosick Falls as State Superfund sites to unlock state funding resources under the State Superfund Program to address the contamination in the community. DEC has already initiated its investigation and inspected the Saint-Gobain property. If in the course of its continuing investigation DEC finds any additional sources of PFOA contamination, they will also be listed. The Superfund Class 2 designation will allow the state to use State Superfund resources to investigate and clean up PFOA contamination much more quickly than waiting for a federal Superfund designation. In addition, the state will be able to seek cost recovery for the investigation and cleanup activities. DEC will collaborate closely with EPA in the investigation of PFOA in groundwater, soil and other media in Hoosick Falls to determine appropriate cleanup activities.

• **Conduct Health Risk Analysis to Establish PFOA Drinking Water Guidance Level:** To address the water supply contamination, the state Department of Health will conduct a risk analysis, examining the latest national research, to establish a drinking water guidance level for PFOA.

• **Retest Private Wells in the Village of Hoosick Falls:** In addition, the state Department of Health will retest 24 private wells in the vicinity of the Saint-Gobain facility.

• **Immediately Install Filtration Systems at School and Other Community Gathering Places:** Out of an abundance of caution, the state committed to installing water filtration systems at the local school, public health facilities and other community gathering places.

• **Blood Testing of Community Members to Begin in Mid-February:** Beginning in mid-February, DOH will begin blood testing for community members for those who wish to be tested.

• **Establish State Hotline for Public to Stay Informed:** Residents can contact 1-800-801-8092 for more information.

Further, once PFOA contamination is addressed, the state committed to work with the community and banks to safeguard property values.

Department of Environmental Conservation Acting Commissioner Basil Seggos said: "Under the direction of Governor Cuomo, New York State is working collaboratively with all levels of government from the EPA to the village and town, to address the contamination in Hoosick Falls. Classifying PFOA as a hazardous substance and making the Saint-Gobain site a State Superfund site will free up resources to investigate and clean up the contamination quickly. We will continue our open dialogue with local officials and the people of Hoosick Falls to ensure they are informed throughout our investigation and remediation."

Department of Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker said: "The actions taken today by Governor Cuomo, the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of Health will safeguard the residents of Hoosick Falls and help address their concerns. The Department of Health will continue to test private wells, and will soon begin a blood testing program to measure residents' exposure to PFOA. Additionally, DOH will continue to examine the latest and best scientific research to establish a drinking water guidance level for PFOA."

Senator Kathy Marchione said: "I want to personally thank Governor Cuomo for convening this afternoon's highly productive and positive meeting regarding Hoosick Falls. The announcement that the state recognizes the seriousness of this issue and is taking purposeful action that will help Hoosick Falls families is welcome news. Our discussion today focused on realistic solutions including the state's regulation of PFOAs, testing of all local wells, blood testing and carbon filtration systems to help protect the health and well-being of families in Hoosick Falls. The positive steps agreed to today are welcome news for the community. I have been carefully monitoring this situation and will continue advocating for Hoosick Falls families as this process moves forward."

Town of Hoosick Supervisor Mark Surdam said: "I am thankful for the Governor's recognition of the problem our community is facing with its water supply, and for the actions the state taking today. I want to assure all of the residents in the Town of Hoosick that we are undergoing a tremendous effort to deal with these concerns."

Village of Hoosick Falls Mayor David Borge said: "I am grateful for Governor

Cuomo's swift action to help our community quickly restore the use of our water supply – and am pleased by the level of coordination by state agencies responding to this issue. This is a major step forward for all residents of the greater Hoosick Falls community."

Hoosick Falls Central School Superintendent Kenneth Facin said: "Today's meeting with Governor Cuomo was productive and meaningful, and promises real results for our students and parents. We are appreciative to be a part of a singular, concerted effort to rectify the environmental issues surrounding our water supply. As a proactive measure to ensure the health and safety of our students, the state is assisting our school district with the installment of a carbon filtration system. We are grateful for the Governor's leadership in galvanizing resources to assist our community."

State's Earlier Actions to Address PFOA Contamination

Today's actions build upon DEC and DOH's initiatives announced earlier this month to address the PFOA contamination to protect public health and the environment. The state urged EPA to take vigorous action on the federal level to regulate PFOA and to quickly add the Hoosick Falls site to the Superfund National Priorities List. The state, Saint-Gobain and the Village are collaboratively working on an agreement to install water treatment systems to remove hazardous chemicals from the Village's water supply. In addition, DOH is undertaking a cancer registry study to investigate the incidence of cancer among Village residents and biomonitoring studies. Further DOH is offering PFOA biomonitoring to measure the level of PFOA in Village residents.

PFOA was detected in the Village's public drinking water in 2014. Since then, DOH has worked closely with the Village to provide technical advice and assistance for water sampling and to evaluate water treatment options to eliminate health risks. Because the levels of PFOA in public water were higher than the EPA health advisory level, DOH determined that people should reduce their exposure by avoiding the use of tap water for drinking and cooking. In addition, DOH continues to monitor private wells and will have more results very soon.

Although the use of PFOA is being phased out, it is still used to make household and commercial products that resist heat, and repel oil, stains, grease, and water. This includes nonstick cookware, surface coatings for stain-resistant carpets and fabric, and paper and cardboard food packaging. Studies of people have associated exposure to PFOA with an increased risk for several health effects. This includes associations with effects on the liver, immune system, thyroid gland, cholesterol levels, blood pressure during pregnancy, and kidney and testicular cancer.

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