To: Downing, Jane[Downing.Jane@epa.gov]

Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy

From: DePeiza, Yvette (DEP)
Sent: Thur 2/18/2016 4:41:10 PM
Subject: RE: News Clips (Hoosick Falls) - PFCs

Hi Jane, What will EPA require or recommend for system exceeding the health advisory? Y

From: Downing, Jane [mailto:Downing.Jane@epa.gov]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2016 11:27 AM

Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy

Cc: Gilleland, Lynn; Ryan, Chris
Subject: FW: News Clips (Hoosick Falls) - PFCs

Good Morning All

This is FYI on press clips on the PFC contaminants of concern (PFOA/PFOS).

Ellen – are you aware that VT DEC is doing PFOA sampling in No Bennington Water System – and private wells. What's the plan if detects?

Note To all -

On top of everything else – we need to keep our eyes open for PFOA/PFOS developments. EPA is expected to soon lower the provisional health advisories and create lifetime advisories for PFOA and PFOS which may impact some public water supplies in NE. According to UCMR, 4 systems had PFOS detects above 100 ppt: Hyannis, Sanford ME, Westfield and Dover NH. More to come.

Call if questions/concerns

Thanks

Jane

From: Region2 PAD News <Region2_PAD_News@epa.gov>
Date: February 18, 2016 at 8:50:22 AM EST
To: "R2 EPA Region 2 (EPA Staff)" <R2_EPA_Region_2_EPA_Staff@epa.gov>
Subject: News Clips (Hoosick Falls)

Record: Editorial: The Record: Clean water

February 18, 2016

Bergen Record

KEEPING WATER safe to drink is a constant struggle, especially when chemicals unknown a few generations ago are now turning up in the water supply.

A substance known as perfluorooctanoic acid, or PFOA, was first developed in 1947 and became widely used in the 1950s, first as a compound in Teflon and eventually in the manufacture of such everyday products as stain-resistant carpets, waterproof clothing and non-stick cooking pans.

Over time, the compound breaks down, sometimes into dust, and travels through the air, often for great distances. Experts say the chemical is so stable it even has traveled to the Arctic.

A more local concern is that recent state and federal tests have detected the chemical in a number of New Jersey water systems, including five in Bergen and Passaic counties. Tests show PFOA levels of at least 0.02 parts per billion in water systems in Ridgewood, Fair Lawn, Garfield, Wallington and Hawthorne.

That level is considered high enough by some experts to cause health concerns under long-term exposure. The chemical has been linked to a variety of ailments, including kidney and testicular cancer, high cholesterol and thyroid disease.

The problem is that the chemical is not officially regulated by the state or federal governments.

The state Department of Environmental Protection is working with the state's Drinking Water Quality Institute to devise standards for PFOA. A spokesman for the DEP says New Jersey has been far more aggressive than other states and even the federal government in addressing health risks posed by PFOA.

While that's encouraging, the substance in question poses some particular problems.

For some reason, it seems to contaminate water from wells more than it does surface water such as reservoirs. Normally, well water drawn from aquifers is considered purer than surface water.

There are filters that can remove PFOA from well water, but they have to be installed in every well. This can be expensive, because many water systems have dozens of wells. The Ridgewood Water system, for example, operates 56 wells. Installing filters in every well can be a burden for small water systems, especially those that serve individual municipalities. There are practical limits as to how high water rates can be raised.

Some experts told The Record that dealing with PFOA may encourage some small water utilities to sell their systems to a private company. State grants are another possibility. Fair Lawn just received a $1.2 million DEP grant to equip its wells with a carbon filter system as a pilot program.

Clearly, officials at all levels of government need to be aggressive in eliminating this chemical from our public water supply. There are many examples of lingering water contamination in New Jersey, most recently at a Superfund site in Ringwood where the federal government plans to again test water quality near where Ford Motor Co. dumped toxic paint sludge more than 50 years ago.

We can't wait 50 years to get rid of PFOA. Officials must work together to reach a goal that was well said by Tracy Carluccio, deputy director of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network: "This stuff doesn't belong in our water."

WRGB

Understanding PFOA, the chemical behind water crisis

By Cody Holyoke Wednesday, February 17th 2016

SCHENECTADY -- At first glance, you'd never imagine a clear, waxy substance, could singlehandedly plunge a village into the middle of a health crisis.

'PFOA' is a tricky, manmade substance that repels water and oil. It can enter your body through the water, through the air, and through your food.

In fact, scientists say it's nearly everywherein smaller quantities.

"If you've ever eaten a bag of microwave popcorn, you've been exposed to this chemical," explained Laura MacManus-Spencer, an associate professor of chemistry at Union College.

She's been studying the stuff for more than a decade, and she says she's concerned about potential health effects in Hoosick Falls, where high concentrations of the chemical were found in the village's public water supply.

"[People there] have undoubtedly been exposed to a much higher concentration than the general public," MacManus-Spencer explained.

"These chemicals are different. They're both water repellent and fat repellent, so when they get into your body, they end up in your blood, kidneys, liver, places where there's high protein content," she continued.

Experts are concerned the higher concentration in Hoosick Falls will stay the people who live there for a long time.

The science to completely remove PFOA, MacManus-Spencer says, just isn't available yet--though crews are trying to filter it out of the public water supply.

"The biggest question in my mind is what they'll do moving forward. These are such persistent chemicals they're hard to remove," she explained.

NEWS10

DEC testing for possible PFOA contamination in North Bennington

By Lindsay Nielsen Published: February 17, 2016, 5:22 pm Updated: February 17, 2016, 7:13 pm

NORTH BENNINGTON, Vt. (NEWS10) – Concerns of water contamination has hit a Vermont community after a dangerous chemical was found in the water in Hoosick Falls.

A person from New York contacted Vermont officials to tell them about a company called ChemFab that used to operate in North Bennington. Now, the Department of Environmental Conservation is testing for PFOA.

The hazardous chemical was found in the water supply in the village of Hoosick Falls in New York.

“You know, we’re just moving very fast with technology without realizing what some of the things can do to us,” Jackie Tennyson, of North Bennington, said.

Tennyson has lived in her North Bennington home for 13 years. She never thought about the old manufacturing site that sits nearby.

“At the time, ChemFab was no longer here,” she said.

ChemFab used to produce Teflon as its Water Street site, and it may have used the hazardous chemical PFOA.

Now the DEC is taking water samples from the town of Bennington’s wastewater filtration plant, the village of North Bennington’s water system, and some private wells in North Bennington.

A company called HC White is next door to the old ChemFab site. It also made Teflon and could have used PFOA as well.

Bennington Town Manager Stuart Hurd believes contamination is unlikely but not impossible.

“If this PFOA is anything like PCBs, they bind themselves to the soil particles so they don’t move,” he said.

For Tennyson, the fear is real. She wonders about a loved one she lost whom she said worked at the PFOA-contaminated McCaffrey Street site in Hoosick Falls.

“He died of cancer just five years ago, and that’s what he did,” she said. “He made Teflon tape.”

Officials are now waiting for the results from the DEC.

NEWS10

Petersburgh Town Supervisor issues letter to residents highlighting PFOA concerns

By Ali Stewart

Published: February 17, 2016, 2:04 pm | Updated: February 17, 2016, 2:40 pm

Rensselaer_County

PETERSBURGH, N.Y. (NEWS10) – The town of Petersburgh has begun testing its water after nearby Hoosick Falls tested positive for the dangerous chemical PFOA.

Petersburgh Town Supervisor Peter Schaaphok said testing is already underway. After learning of the water contamination in the village of Hoosick Falls, he made a call to Taconic Plastics.

PFOA is a dangerous chemical linked to serious health concerns such as cancer. The chemical was found in the water in the village of Hoosick Falls.

Taconic Plastics makes Teflon-coated products at its Petersburgh site.

The Department of Environmental Conservation said Taconic’s legal representatives informed them the plant had previously been the site of PFOA contamination, but the company refused to comment on what the PFOA levels were.

That’s why he’s issued a letter to residents, advising that water test results will be in by next week or so. He says Taconic has not used this chemical since 2003.

WNYT

DEC testing North Bennington water for PFOA

Anna Meiler

Created: 02/18/2016 12:02 AM

NORTH BENNINGTON - The water crisis in Hoosick Falls has triggered DEC officials to start testing the drinking water in North Bennington, Vermont.

There was once a similar plant there that likely used the chemical PFOA in its manufacturing for years.

Debbie Lackey spent decades making Teflon products at that company called Chemfab.

“She would come home smelling of just this strange chemical smell. She would have a blue coating on her clothing when she got home,” said her daughter, Korey Arnold.

Debbie was just 56 years old when she died from lung cancer in August 2014. That's the same month a resident discovered the toxic chemical PFOA in the drinking water in Hoosick Falls. The DEC says the contamination there was caused by Saint Gobain, a plant that manufactures Teflon, just like Chemfab in North Bennington.

Korey Arnold's mom also worked at Saint Gobain after they bought Chemfab and now she has a feeling PFOA contributed to her mother's death.

“Do we know for sure if it's from PFOA? We’re probably never going to know for sure, but we really do think it played a big role in her having lung cancer,” said Arnold.

People living in North Bennington are now wondering if they could have the same problem as people in Hoosick Falls. Those concerns prompted DEC officials to test the drinking water in North Bennington. Town Manager Stuart Hurd says the private wells are a bigger concern than the municipal water.

“Our sources are out of the green mountains. They’re surface sources not aquifer based. I don't think it would be an issue,” said Hurd.

John Lafountain says many people in the village are anxious to know if their water is safe.

“I got two kids and if they're drinking the water and showering and it's a problem, then it's a concern,” said Lafountain.

Korey Arnold is eager too.

“If they can save lives or keep people healthy I think they should do the testing. Make it right,” she said.

DEC officials say test results should be ready in the next few weeks.

# # #