Message

From: Dunlap, David [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=591EB15A268249DDA0C05A7451F765C3-DUNLAP, DAV]
Sent: 2/19/2019 1:18:27 AM
To: Hewitt, James [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=41b19dd598d340bb8032923d902d4bd1-Hewitt, Jam]
CC: Abboud, Michael [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b6f5af791a1842f1adcc088cbf9ed3ce-Abboud, Mic]
Subject: RE: For Review: The Intercept (Sharon Lerner) re IRIS assessment of ethylene oxide (2/14)

James,

Deliberative Process / Ex. 5

DDD

David D. Dunlap
O – 202.564.6620

From: Hewitt, James
Sent: Friday, February 15, 2019 11:12 AM
To: Dunlap, David <dunlap.david@epa.gov>
Cc: Abboud, Michael <abboud.michael@epa.gov>
Subject: Fwd: For Review: The Intercept (Sharon Lerner) re IRIS assessment of ethylene oxide (2/14)

David, flagging this for you. This good to share?

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

> **Resent-From:** <Press@epa.gov>
> **From:** "Jones, Enesta" <Jones.Enesta@epa.gov>
> **Date:** February 14, 2019 at 4:07:57 PM EST
> **To:** Press <Press@epa.gov>
> **Subject: For Review: The Intercept (Sharon Lerner) re IRIS assessment of ethylene oxide (2/14)**
>
> **From OMS. Ok to send?**
>
> **Q: I realize I also should have asked about the status of the ACC's request for correction of the IRIS assessment of ethylene oxide. I assume that IRIS has not responded to that yet. (I've checked the IRIS website and not seen anything). Please correct me if I'm wrong.**

Deliberative Process / Ex. 5

Deliberative Process / Ex. 5

Begin forwarded message:

Resent-From: <Press@epa.gov>
From: Sharon Lerner <sharon.lerner@theintercept.com>
Date: February 12, 2019 at 2:42:12 PM EST
To: "Jones, Enesta" <Jones.Enesta@epa.gov>
Cc: Press <Press@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: questions for a piece about air pollution

Thanks so much, Enesta. I really appreciate it. I realize I also should have asked about the status of the ACC's request for correction of the IRIS assessment of ethylene oxide. I assume that IRIS has not responded to that yet. (I've checked the IRIS website and not seen anything). Please correct me if I'm wrong.
Thanks,
Sharon

Sharon Lerner
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On Feb 12, 2019, at 2:25 PM, Jones, Enesta <Jones.Enesta@epa.gov> wrote:

Hi Sharon,

EPA has been fully engaged in Willowbrook, working with elected officials, community leaders, local press and the facility to address and assess the ethylene oxide (EtO) issue. Actions taken by EPA over the last year include in chronological order, latest to oldest:

- During the partial government shutdown, EPA brought in staff to collect air sampling data at the normal collection interval and review the data to continue our ongoing effort to assess and address the EtO issue. (December 2018 – January 2019)
- EPA held a public webinar to discuss the most recent ambient air data and field other questions from the community. (December 2018)
- On December 13, the cities of Willowbrook and Burr Ridge released their reports on their own monitoring conducted in the previous month. EPA is still reviewing this data. (December 2018)
- EPA provided heads up to elected officials and staff and then posted results for three days of air quality monitoring in Willowbrook: November 13, 16 and 19.

    - Monitors detected ethylene oxide in the air at the two sites closest to the Sterigenics facility.
    - Monitors did not detect ethylene oxide at the six community-oriented sites -- those at schools and in residential areas.
    - It is premature to draw conclusions from the data. EPA plans to continue monitoring in the Willowbrook area for three months and will continue to post data as it becomes available.
    - On December 17, 2018, EPA posted monitoring results for an additional day: November 23. (December 2018)
- EPA hosted an open house and community forum to provide updates on the agency's work to better understand air emission from the facility in Willowbrook. EPA also met separately with elected officials and their staff from Lake County and from Willowbrook and surrounding communities to update them on our work. (November 2018)
- Intends to conduct and communicate air quality monitoring and additional risk assessment activity around the facility. EPA is also engaging elected officials and community leaders to hold an additional public meeting in late November. (November 2018)
- Received and are reviewing the final, full report from the stack tests conducted on September 20 and 21. The agency will use information from the stack test reports to estimate current emissions from the Sterigenics facility and to inform additional risk assessment and ambient air monitoring work. (October 2018)
- Held an in-person meeting at EPA's Chicago office with elected officials and their staff to provide an update on these efforts. (September 2018)
- Sent a detailed letter from EPA's Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation, Bill Wehrum, to top elected leadership in Illinois outlining these actions and detailing plans to conduct additional air quality monitoring and risk assessment. (September 2018)
- Received initial stack test results from Sterigenics, indicating a control efficiency above 99 percent. (September 2018)
- Observed stack tests conducted to measure the actual emissions from control devices at the facility. (September 2018)
- Continues to update the ethylene oxide website information, including FAQs for Willowbrook and that outlines the two-pronged strategy for addressing EtO: 1) to review regulations for facilities that emit EtO, including the emission standards for commercial sterilizers (the rule that covers the Sterigenics facility in Willowbrook), and 2) to get additional information on EtO emissions to determine whether additional reductions are necessary. (August 2018 – present)
- Released the most recent update to the National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA), which uses emissions data from the most recent National Emissions Inventory to estimate health risks from toxic air pollutants. The updated NATA estimates that ethylene oxide significantly contributes to potential elevated cancer risks, based on chronic, lifetime exposure, in some census tracts across the U.S., and these elevated risks are largely driven by an EPA risk value that was updated in late 2016. EPA offices reached out to state, local, and federal officials to notify them of results. (August 2018)
- Reviewed and approved construction permit application for Sterigenics to install additional pollution controls and protocol for additional stack testing to evaluate pollution control improvements. (June – September 2018)

- Provided technical assistance to contextualize and communicate results of monitoring and modeling conducted by EPA Region 5 around the facility. (June – October 2018)
- Completed the process to quality assure and provide EPA regions and state coregulators the chance to review the draft National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA), a screening tool that highlights pollutants and emissions sources to study further in order to understand the risk to public health. Based on preliminary data from NATA, EPA regional offices collected additional information to verify initial estimates. (Late 2017 – August 2018)

11) When did David Dunlap, the head of EPA's Office of Research and Development, begin work at the agency?

Mr. Dunlap was appointed Deputy Assistant Administrator on September 30, 2018.

12) Mr. Dunlap recused himself from working on the IRIS assessment of formaldehyde in a letter was dated December 19, 2018. That same day, IRIS issued an agenda for upcoming activities that omitted formaldehyde, which had been on previous agendas. The timing — and the fact that Dunlap's letter recused himself from future work on the chemical but didn't address any work he might have done up to that point — seems to suggest that he may have had a role in removing formaldehyde from IRIS's agenda. Do you wish to comment?

On August 10, 2018, ORD delivered a memorandum to the Assistant Administrators and their deputies. The programs were asked to identify priorities for future IRIS assessments as part of the Agency's continuing effort to ensure IRIS assessment activities are focused on the most important Agency needs. Each program was given complete latitude to select its own priorities. After these priorities with proper signatures were received, a summary memo was sent on December 4, 2018, announcing the seven chemicals for priority IRIS assessment (PFAS counts as one but covers five substances). The list of seven chemicals was then announced to the public via the Agency's website. The Programs did not identify formaldehyde as a top priority. Program offices identified Hexavalent Chromium, Inorganic Arsenic, Mercury salts, Methylmercury, PCBs, varieties of PFAS, and Vanadium. Should their priority needs change, Program offices are able to nominate new assessment needs at any time.

13) Last year, for the second time, representatives of the company Denka asked IRIS to reconsider its assessment of chloroprene. What is the status of that request?

EPA received supplemental information from Denka on February 1, 2019 regarding the RFR and the Agency is in the process of responding.

On Feb 12, 2019, at 1:14 PM, Sharon Lerner <sharon.lerner@theintercept.com> wrote:

Hi Enesta-
Just checking in about this. It looks like you can have until the end of business Friday to respond. Can you please let me know if you intend to get back to us?
Thanks,

Sharon

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On Feb 6, 2019, at 2:40 PM, Jones, Enesta <Jones.Enesta@epa.gov> wrote:

Got it, Sharon.

On Feb 6, 2019, at 2:39 PM, Sharon Lerner <sharon.lerner@theintercept.com> wrote:

Enesta and the press team-

I have one more question: Why did EPA single out the Sterigenics plant in Willowbrook for certain efforts performed before the NATA report was released?

Thank you

Sharon
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On Feb 6, 2019, at 9:18 AM, Jones, Enesta <Jones.Enesta@epa.gov> wrote:

Hi Sharon, let me check.

On Feb 5, 2019, at 6:18 PM, Sharon Lerner <sharon.lerner@theintercept.com> wrote:

Hi EPA press team-

Below are some questions related to a story I'm writing about air pollution. Can you please get back to me by the end of the day this coming Friday, 2/8?

1) A recent report by a CBS News affiliate in Chicago included allegations that the EPA has known Sterigenics was emitting ethylene oxide at unsafe levels for years. Do you want to respond to that or comment?

2) I note in my story that some in the Willowbrook area felt that the EPA didn't respond quickly enough to their ethylene oxide problem. I did see your October press release that address some of these criticisms. Just wanted to see if you wanted to add anything to that.

3) That press release notes that you requested that ATSDR evaluate the potential health impacts of the ethylene oxide emitted from the Sterigenics plant in Willowbrook. Did you ask ATSDR for reports for the other places where ethylene oxide is emitted at similar or higher levels?

If so, which ones?
If not, why not?

4) As soon as the NATA report was published in August of 2018, you notified the residents of Willowbrook about the risk they faced. Did you do this for any other community that had an elevated risk of cancer due to ethylene oxide or for any other community that had an elevated risk of cancer due to other tract pollutants?

If so, which ones and when?

If not, why not?

5) Did you create webpages about ethylene oxide contamination in places that were identified in the NATA report as having cancer risks above 100 in a million?

If so, which ones and when?

If not, why not?

6) The chief of the EPA's office of Air and Radiation, William Wehrum, went to speak with the residents of Willowbrook in November. Did Mr. Wehrum meet and speak with residents of any of the other communities with cancer risks from ethylene oxide that were above 100?

If so, which ones and when?

If not, why not?

7) Wilma Subra, an environmental consultant in Louisiana, said that the EPA has not asked ATSDR to evaluate the risk from ethylene oxide in communities in Louisiana that have an elevated risk of cancer or do air monitoring in those communities.

Is this true?

If not, in what other communities is EPA doing monitoring for ethylene oxide emissions? And for what other communities have they asked ATSDR to write reports on the threat from ethylene oxide emissions?

8) Besides the Sterigenics plant in Willowbrook, has the agency worked to help install pollution controls at any other facilities identified in the NATA report as responsible for ethylene oxide emissions that resulted in an estimated cancer risk above 100?

If so, which ones? And when?

If not, why not?

9) Did any EPA staff visit St. John to discuss the risk from chloroprene?

If so, who and when?

If not, why not?

10) The residents of St. John told me they didn't learn about the elevated cancer risk from chloroprene in their community until July of 2016 even though the NATA report identifying that risk was published in December of 2015. And when they learned of it, it was from an independent environmental consultant.

Why didn't you directly inform the residents of this risk as soon as you knew of it?

11) When did David Dunlap, the head of EPA's Office of Research and Development, begin work at the agency?

12) Mr. Dunlap recused himself from working on the IRIS assessment of formaldehyde in a letter was dated December 19, 2018. That same day, IRIS issued an agenda for upcoming activities that omitted formaldehyde, which had been on previous agendas. The timing — and the fact that Dunlap's letter recused

himself from future work on the chemical but didn't address any work he might have done up to that point — seems to suggest that he may have had a role in removing formaldehyde from IRIS's agenda. Do you wish to comment?

13) Last year, for the second time, representatives of the company Denka asked IRIS to reconsider its assessment of chloroprene. What is the status of that request?

Thank you for your help and please let me know if you need clarification from me on any of this,
Sharon

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