Message

From: Klassman, Debra [klassman.debra@epa.gov]
Sent: 10/23/2018 1:53:20 PM
To: Holst, Linda [holst.linda@epa.gov]
Subject: RE: Press inquiry - Central Sands investigation

Ex. 5 AC/AWP

From: Holst, Linda
Sent: Tuesday, October 23, 2018 7:43 AM
To: Nelson, Leverett <nelson.leverett@epa.gov>; Klassman, Debra <klassman.debra@epa.gov>; Mikalian, Charles <mikalian.charles@epa.gov>; Poy, Thomas <poy.thomas@epa.gov>; Baltazar, Debbie <baltazar.debbie@epa.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Press inquiry - Central Sands investigation

Ex. 5 AC/AWP

Linda

Acting Director|Water Division|EPA Region 5
(312) 886-6758|holst.linda@epa.gov

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Kuefler, Patrick" <kuefler.patrick@epa.gov>
Date: October 22, 2018 at 1:54:17 PM CDT
To: "Lippert, Allison" <lippert.allison@epa.gov>, "Holst, Linda" <holst.linda@epa.gov>, "Baltazar, Debbie" <baltazar.debbie@epa.gov>, "Bahr, Ryan" <bahr.ryan@epa.gov>, "Burdett, Cheryl" <burdett.cheryl@epa.gov>, "Mikalian, Charles" <mikalian.charles@epa.gov>, "Poy, Thomas" <poy.thomas@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Press inquiry - Central Sands investigation

Drinking water is the lead on follow up and Chuck is the assigned attorney so I am including them. Below are my suggested responses for the one's for which I know the answer.

From: Lippert, Allison
Sent: Monday, October 22, 2018 1:28 PM
To: Holst, Linda <holst.linda@epa.gov>; Baltazar, Debbie <baltazar.debbie@epa.gov>; Kuefler, Patrick <kuefler.patrick@epa.gov>; Bahr, Ryan <bahr.ryan@epa.gov>; Burdett, Cheryl <burdett.cheryl@epa.gov>
Subject: Press inquiry - Central Sands investigation

All, please see the below request. Can you work on responses to the reporter's questions? We will share with the RA and DRA.

Request – Star Tribune (Josephine Marcotty) – DDL 10/25

I'm doing a story on water issues in Wisconsin, and it will include a description of the controversy around the Central Sands Dairy in Armenia. I understand the EPA has conducted monitoring of groundwater there, and I've seen the testing results you posted on the web site. They do show elevated levels of nitrate.

I'd like to know what the EPA's next steps are in this investigation. Some of the residents of Armenia said that they are waiting for the results of your testing that identifies whether the nitrate in groundwater is from fertilizer, manure, human waste or other sources. Are you going to release that publicly? If so, when? EPA has a policy of not discussing any potential enforcement. All of the sampling results from the May 2017 sampling event are posted on the website as promised. The site was updated last week.

They also say that the EPA will not release that identifying (isotope testing?) information to the public if it decides to take enforcement action against the Central Sands Dairy or other responsible party. Is that correct? If so, can you explain why would it not be made public even with an enforcement action? Isotope test results and analysis is available on the website

And what will determine whether or not you take an enforcement action, and how long would it take if you do take such a step?

Several residents and their attorneys say they believe it's unlikely the EPA will take action. In part, that's because the EPA chose not to step in when residents in Kewaunee County, Wis. asked for federal intervention related to drinking water contamination by CAFOs. And they also say it's unlikely because Region 5 Administrator Cathy Stepp is the person who implemented many of the policies while at the Wisconsin DNR that have resulted in lax protection of water, including drinking water.

Can you respond to those two assertions? I ask because that's why many local residents are considering joining a law suit against Central Sands. They are not confident that the state or the EPA will take steps to solve the problem. And is Cathy Stepp overseeing this EPA investigation into Armenia's drinking water contamination now?

Allison Lippert
U.S. EPA Region 5
312-353-0967