Message

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Sent: 5/18/2020 10:02:31 PM
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Subject: Media Inquiry - MD Public Radio - Chesapeake Bay and PA

Importance: High

All,

Here's another media inquiry that came in late this afternoon regarding the Notices of Intent to Sue EPA and additional questions regarding sewage treatment plants in PA and sewer discharges in Harrisburg.

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Hello, Terri.

Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia filed a notice of intent to sue EPA today over its alleged failure to enforce the Chesapeake Bay cleanup plan (the Bay TMDL), especially regarding Pennsylvania and New York State.

Two questions for my public radio program, "The Environment in Focus":

1) What is EPA's response to this legal action?

2) Why hasn't EPA threatened Pennsylvania to force it to upgrade its sewage plants to the same "Enhanced Nutrient Removal" standards for nitrogen that Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia are following as they have modernized their sewage plants? EPA and the federal Clean Water Act have direct authority over point sources like this -- unlike in agriculture, where EPA has less authority -- and yet EPA has allowed Pennsylvania to follow a much more lax standard for its wastewater plants than PA, VA or DC. Why?

3) Pennsylvania's capital, Harrisburg, released about 900 million gallons of sewage mixed with stormwater last year into the Bay's biggest tributary, the Susquehanna River -- including waste piped directly from the Governor's Mansion and State Office Complex. Why did EPA sign a "partial consent decree" with Harrisburg Capital Region Water in 2015 that allows this sewage dumping to continue indefinitely? Why won't EPA require the PA government to stop dumping its sewage directly into the Susquehanna?

Please send me your emailed responses by Noon tomorrow (May 19).

Here is a link to Virginia's announcement.

Thanks,

Tom Pelton
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