Message

From: Modie Jonathan N [JONATHAN.N.MODIE@dhsoha.state.or.us]
Sent: 1/17/2020 12:30:38 AM
To: GLEIM Laura [Laura.GLEIM@state.or.us]; Skadowski, Suzanne [Skadowski.Suzanne@epa.gov]; CANTU-SCHOMUS Andrea [Andrea.Cantu-Schomus@state.or.us]
Subject: RE: DEQ statement - Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area

Thanks, Laura. Here's what we would say on the issue if asked:

Oregon Health Authority regulates public water systems to ensure the water supplied to residents meets all standards. If nitrate levels exceed safe levels, public water suppliers are required to issue advisories to notify the public and to take necessary corrective action. There are public water systems that have been impacted by nitrates in the Lower Umatilla Basin and some have had to install additional treatment or drill new wells.

For private well operators, OHA has recommended annually testing wells for nitrate. Nitrate levels above 10 mg/L (10 ppm) most likely means that surface contamination has found its way into the well. In this case, OHA recommends operators identify and remove any possible sources of nitrates near the well (fertilizers, animal waste, septic system, etc.). OHA also recommends they contact a licensed well constructor to inspect the well for possible repairs and/or treatment options.

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From: GLEIM Laura <Laura.GLEIM@state.or.us>
Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2020 3:25 PM
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Subject: DEQ statement - Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area

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Hey partners,

See below the statement I'll be providing to reporters. Tracy Loew with Statesman Journal and Courtney Flatt with OPB have both reached out.

DEQ has been concerned about nitrate contamination in groundwater in the Lower Umatilla Basin for decades. There are many sources of nitrates in the area, including farm fertilizers, septic systems, wastewater treatment systems,

animal waste, and food processing systems. Nitrate contamination in this area is a complex problem that requires long-term coordination between a variety of government agencies, local businesses and residents. DEQ will continue working with our governments partners and others in Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area to address this issue.

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