Message

From: Furey, Eileen [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=5AAA3A0EE58047D983897C53C1EB283E-EFUREY]
Sent: 2/14/2022 9:39:49 PM
To: Mooney, John [Mooney.John@epa.gov]
Subject: FW: Preliminary findings of Health Consultation Chicago

fyi

Eileen L. Furey (she/her)
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From: Megan Cunningham <Megan.Cunningham@cityofchicago.org>
Sent: Monday, February 14, 2022 3:28 PM
To: Walts, Alan <walts.alan@epa.gov>; Furey, Eileen <furey.eileen@epa.gov>; Beckmann, Ronna Erin <beckmann.ronna@epa.gov>
Subject: Fw: Preliminary findings of Health Consultation Chicago

Hi EPA team,

My commissioner reached out to ATSDR Director Breysse. Our message is included below for your awareness.

-mc

Megan Cunningham

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DePaul Center

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CDPH
Chicago Department of Public Health

From: Allison Arwady <Allison.Arwady@cityofchicago.org>
Sent: Monday, February 14, 2022 3:02 PM
To: pjb7@cdc.gov <pjb7@cdc.gov>
Cc: Megan Cunningham <Megan.Cunningham@cityofchicago.org>
Subject: Preliminary findings of Health Consultation Chicago

Dear Director Breysse,

As you are likely aware, the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) is in the process of evaluating a permit application submitted by RMG/Southside Recycling to operate a large recycling facility on the Southeast side of Chicago. At the suggestion of the U.S. EPA, we have conducted a health impact assessment (HIA) to ensure that we fully consider the potential health, environmental, and quality of life impacts associated with the proposed facility. One element of our HIA is an assessment of existing conditions on the Southeast side. We very much appreciate ATSDR's technical assistance with the Health Consultation--analyzing local air quality and its potential health impacts on residents.

There is a lot of public interest in this HIA and permit decision and CDPH needs to adhere to our publicly announced commitments on timing. We are holding a public engagement session on the HIA to review our findings tomorrow evening (February 15). We then plan to release the HIA summary as well as our final permit decision later this week (likely February 16 or 17). This would be followed by a release and posting of the detailed report/appendices by the end of February.

I understand from my team that ATSDR may not be able to publicly release its Health Consultation until later this month. We obviously would not share this full document before it has been cleared--but would plan to make it available by the "end of the month" timeline so we can post it on the website where we post all relevant documents. I used to work at the CDC, so I of course understand appreciate the importance of the formal clearance process. But I also know that ATSDR shares CDPH's goal of ensuring that this Health Consultation can be used to meaningfully inform how we understand and characterize community vulnerability on the Southeast side. Your conclusions are a critical input for the HIA, and we have used the following high-level conclusions from ATSDR's draft report in our HIA and decision-making--recognizing of course that they are preliminary and subject to revision:

- *Based on recent air monitoring data (2016-2020), breathing particles smaller than 10 microns in diameter (PM10) and particles smaller than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM2.5) could be harmful for highly sensitive people, especially if they live in the direction that the wind is blowing (or downwind) from RMG and other industrial and commercial sites. Highly sensitive populations are people who have pre-existing heart and lung health conditions like asthma, heart disease, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Being exposed to PM over short periods of time (short-term, 24-hours) and long periods of time (long-term, several months) can be harmful to highly sensitive populations. ATSDR does not expect people living near RMG who are not considered to be part of a highly sensitive population to develop health problems from breathing PM in the air.*

- *Based on recent air monitoring (2015-2020) and historic data (1982-2015), people living downwind of RMG (now or in the past) are not likely to develop health problems from breathing metals in the air. The metals we looked at include arsenic, cadmium, chromium, lead, manganese, and nickel. It is not likely that people will experience an increased risk of cancer or other health problems from breathing the metals.*

As such, we plan to incorporate these *preliminary* ATSDR conclusions into our HIA summary report that will be published later this week. CDPH will not refer to your conclusions during our public meeting tomorrow. We will also include language being clear that these are not final ATSDR conclusions, but we think it is important that this work is referenced. Please let us know if you suggest any changes to the disclaimer language we would include to convey that these findings are preliminary and subject to change:

> *ATSDR provided CDPH with preliminary data from its Health Consultation to inform our HIA process and report. These conclusions are subject to further review and, as such, may be amended before the Health Consultation is published. CDPH will update its HIA summary report as necessary to reflect ATSDR's final information. We will post the full Health Consultation on our website when it is available.*

Both CDPH and ATSDR are attempting to navigate a sensitive situation here. I hope you'll agree this is a reasonable compromise. It's a path forward that ensures ATSDR's Health Consultation data can be used as intended: to help protect and promote health for Southeast side residents.

Please don't hesitate to contact me or Megan Cunningham (who is leading on this work; her contact information below) if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Allison

Allison Arwady, MD, MPH
Commissioner
Chicago Department of Public Health
312-747-9870

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