Message

From: Leathers, James [Leathers.James@epa.gov]
Sent: 9/16/2020 1:50:08 PM
To: Spina, Providence [Spina.Providence@epa.gov]; Hoyt, Daniel [Hoyt.Daniel@epa.gov]
CC: Lannen, Justin [Lannen.Justin@epa.gov]; steven.shermer@usdoj.gov
Subject: FW: Media inquiry--Denka

Just providing an FYI that Justin and I (with others from the Region) will be working on this today. Right now in the region, edits and drafting is all being done my email (so it is not off to a great start). I will be adding a working document to our Teams (case team) site, in case you want to review or edit. Most of this is not Enforcement, but it is important to share whatever we will be saying publicly.

James Leathers
Environmental Engineer
EPA Region 6
Air Toxics Enforcement
Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division
1201 Elm St., Suite 500, ECDAT
Dallas, TX 75270
(214) 665-6569
leathers.james@epa.gov

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From: Durant, Jennah <Durant.Jennah@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 3:19 PM
To: Schiermeyer, Corry <schiermeyer.corry@epa.gov>; Robinson, Jeffrey <Robinson.Jeffrey@epa.gov>; Thompson, Steve <thompson.steve@epa.gov>; Leathers, James <Leathers.James@epa.gov>; Verhalen, Frances <verhalen.frances@epa.gov>; Casso, Ruben <Casso.Ruben@epa.gov>; Stucky, Marie <Stucky.Marie@epa.gov>; Blanco, Arturo <Blanco.Arturo@epa.gov>; Vaughn, Gloria <Vaughn.Gloria@epa.gov>
Cc: McAtee, Jeffrey <McAtee.Jeffrey@epa.gov>; Hubbard, Joseph <Hubbard.Joseph@epa.gov>; Taheri, Diane <Taheri.Diane@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Media inquiry--Denka

Yes, it's USA Today.

From: Schiermeyer, Corry <schiermeyer.corry@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 3:17 PM
To: Robinson, Jeffrey <Robinson.Jeffrey@epa.gov>; Durant, Jennah <Durant.Jennah@epa.gov>; Thompson, Steve <thompson.steve@epa.gov>; Leathers, James <Leathers.James@epa.gov>; Verhalen, Frances <verhalen.frances@epa.gov>; Casso, Ruben <Casso.Ruben@epa.gov>; Stucky, Marie <Stucky.Marie@epa.gov>; Blanco, Arturo <Blanco.Arturo@epa.gov>; Vaughn, Gloria <Vaughn.Gloria@epa.gov>
Cc: McAtee, Jeffrey <McAtee.Jeffrey@epa.gov>; Hubbard, Joseph <Hubbard.Joseph@epa.gov>; Taheri, Diane <Taheri.Diane@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Media inquiry--Denka

Jenna…is this from USA Today or a different inquiry?

From: Robinson, Jeffrey <Robinson.Jeffrey@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 4:13 PM
To: Durant, Jennah <Durant.Jennah@epa.gov>; Thompson, Steve <thompson.steve@epa.gov>; Leathers, James <Leathers.James@epa.gov>; Verhalen, Frances <verhalen.frances@epa.gov>; Casso, Ruben <Casso.Ruben@epa.gov>; Stucky, Marie <Stucky.Marie@epa.gov>; Blanco, Arturo <Blanco.Arturo@epa.gov>; Vaughn, Gloria <Vaughn.Gloria@epa.gov>
Cc: McAtee, Jeffrey <McAtee.Jeffrey@epa.gov>; Hubbard, Joseph <Hubbard.Joseph@epa.gov>; Taheri, Diane <Taheri.Diane@epa.gov>; Schiermeyer, Corry <schiermeyer.corry@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Media inquiry--Denka

Jennah,

Did the Denka Press Message/Desk Statement that was being worked on in August get finalized? I know there is information in that document that responds to quite a bit of this and it had a Q/A section.

Jeff

From: Durant, Jennah <Durant.Jennah@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 3:05 PM
To: Thompson, Steve <thompson.steve@epa.gov>; Leathers, James <Leathers.James@epa.gov>; Verhalen, Frances <verhalen.frances@epa.gov>; Casso, Ruben <Casso.Ruben@epa.gov>; Robinson, Jeffrey <Robinson.Jeffrey@epa.gov>; Stucky, Marie <Stucky.Marie@epa.gov>; Blanco, Arturo <Blanco.Arturo@epa.gov>; Vaughn, Gloria <Vaughn.Gloria@epa.gov>
Cc: McAtee, Jeffrey <McAtee.Jeffrey@epa.gov>; Hubbard, Joseph <Hubbard.Joseph@epa.gov>; Taheri, Diane <Taheri.Diane@epa.gov>; Schiermeyer, Corry <schiermeyer.corry@epa.gov>
Subject: Media inquiry--Denka

All, please see the questions below on Denka. HQ initially had this inquiry, but just let me know that R6 will be answering the questions. The first four questions seem to be a mix of enforcement and monitoring. Arturo and Gloria, can you take the last one? I will need answers by Wednesday afternoon. Sorry for the short deadline.

- When the EPA released its National Air Toxic Assessment (NATA) data in 2015, it listed several census tracts in St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana, as having the highest risks of cancer in the country based on the levels of chloroprene emitted from one plant – the Denka plant in LaPlace, formerly owned by DuPont. That prompted the EPA to install air monitors around the plant in 2016. Those monitors have shown an overall reduction of chloroprene in the air over those four years, but the monitors continue to register chloroprene concentrations far above the recommended level of 0.2 micrograms per cubic meter. I understand that EPA primarily regulates direct emissions from plants, but given that chloroprene still remains above the recommended levels in the surrounding air, why has the EPA never taken any action against Denka to force them to bring down their emissions?
- What could EPA do to force Denka to further reduce emissions?
- What more does EPA need to further monitor and regulate the plant?
- Have any emissions restrictions been imposed on the plant during the pandemic? Why/why not?
- What prompted the EPA to step up monitoring of the Denka plant with new air monitors in 2020?
- What would the EPA say to residents of St. John the Baptist Parish who have told us they feel neglected? They have told us that their relatives and neighbors continue getting sick, and they feel that nobody is looking out for them. How would the EPA respond to that?