To: Jones, Jim[Jones.Jim@epa.gov]
From: Cleland-Hamnett, Wendy
Sent: Wed 1/22/2014 11:13:12 AM
Subject: Fw: Yet another chemical identified as present in West Virginia chemical spill

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From: noreply+feedproxy@google.com <noreply+feedproxy@google.com> on behalf of EDF Health <edfwebteam@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2014 2:49:18 AM
To: Cleland-Hamnett, Wendy
Subject: Yet another chemical identified as present in West Virginia chemical spill

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Yet another chemical identified as present in West Virginia chemical spill

Posted: 21 Jan 2014 06:13 PM PST

By Richard Denison

***Richard Denison, Ph.D.*, is a Senior Scientist.**

Just when you thought this story couldn't get any weirder or worse, it has just been revealed that another chemical substance was present alongside the crude MCHM mixture that leaked into the Elk River and contaminated the drinking water of 300,000 West Virginia residents.

A story published late today in the *Charleston Gazette* by Ken Ward, Jr., reports that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has told officials that a chemical identified as "PPH, stripped" was present in the leaking tank at a level of 5.6%. A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for the substance, provided by the *Gazette*, describes the substance as consisting of 100% "polyglycol ethers" – but withholds the substance's specific chemical identity as "proprietary."

And while the scant toxicity data provided on the substance in the MSDS suggest it has lower acute oral toxicity than the crude MCHM mixture – at least for what is called the "majority component" (suggesting that this substance, too, is a mixture) – the MSDS notes that "PPH, stripped" is a "serious eye irritant" and a skin irritant.

It has already been reported by the Charleston Gazette that some residents making hospital visits did so because of rashes or other skin irritation; other reports indicate eye irritation among residents as well. It should be noted that the MSDS for crude MCHM reports that it is also a skin and eye irritant.

Some quick searches I've done tonight for "PPH" and "PPH, stripped" – including one using *ChemIDPlus*, a large chemical database maintained by the National Library of Medicine, have not yielded further information.

All this means yet more questions and more uncertainty for West Virginia residents. A few:

- How did EPA learn of the presence of this new chemical in the spilled material? So far, EPA's not talking.

- Why did it take 12 days for this information to come out? And then, not from the company, Freedom Industries, that owns and operates the leaking tank?

- Has this chemical been monitored for in the river and drinking water samples? (Presumably not, since its presence was just revealed.)

- Who makes PPH, and will they now reveal its identity given the massive human exposure that has occurred?

- Or will EPA exercise its rarely used authority under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) to compel disclosure of the identity of PPH? Section 14(a)(3) of TSCA provides that confidential business information "shall be disclosed if the [EPA] Administrator determines it necessary to protect health or the environment against an unreasonable risk of injury to health or the environment."

Surely, this is such a case.

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