

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3218

May 17, 2016

Gina McCarthy, Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

I write to ask for the immediate release of updated health advisories for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) in drinking water that include values for protection from long-term exposures. As you know, a range of communities across the country, including Newburgh, New York, are struggling with dangerously high levels of PFOA and PFOS in their water. That is simply unacceptable. The American people have an absolute right to safe, reliable drinking water.

Complicating the problem is the lack of an actionable, national standard from the EPA for PFOA and PFOS. I understand that the EPA has been working to release updated health advisories to replace the existing provisional advisory levels. I strongly urge you to release those updated advisories immediately. Doing so is essential to ensuring that impacted communities are able to take the necessary steps to fully address their water problems.

While I strongly urge an immediate release, should the EPA determine that doing so is not possible, I ask that it instead immediately release updated provisional guidelines that will give impacted communities greater clarity while EPA moves to finalize the new values, such as the site-specific guidance of 100 parts per trillion (ppt) for PFOA in water used for drinking or cooking that EPA Region 2 issued for the Town of Hoosick and Village of Hoosick Falls in New York on January 28, 2016. In a joint letter dated March 10, 2016, the Governors of New York, New Hampshire, and Vermont also referenced the Hoosick Falls guidance level in their request for an updated health advisory.

The urgency cannot be overstated. While Newburgh has switched to an alternate source of drinking water, that source will only last for a matter of weeks. When that happens, thousands of residents of the city of Newburgh, through no fault of their own, will be without a reliable source of clean water. Water treatment efforts will cost millions of dollars - a burden that the financially distressed city of Newburgh cannot, should not and must not bear on its own. The people of Newburgh - over one third of whom live in poverty - deserve swift and decisive action.

In addition to immediately releasing updated PFOA and PFOS advisory levels, I ask that the EPA do everything in its power to assist the city of Newburgh and its residents at this time.

Thank you for your attention to this letter.



Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress