

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

August 22, 2017

The Honorable Heather Wilson
Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Wilson,

We write to you on behalf of the thousands of families we represent in Portsmouth, New Hampshire and the Seacoast region who have been exposed to contaminated drinking water. Specifically, we request that you convene a meeting in New Hampshire with local elected officials to update the community on the Air Force's ongoing efforts to treat water supplies contaminated with perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs) from aqueous film-forming foams (AFFF) used by the Air Force at Pease Air Force Base in Portsmouth. In addition, we ask that you address the concerns raised in the attached letter from several Members of the New Hampshire State Legislature.

As you are aware, the city of Portsmouth closed the Haven well at the former air base in May 2014 after the Air Force found levels of PFOS at 12.5 times higher than what was then the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) provisional health advisory. Blood tests conducted in 2015 and 2016 on adults and children who drank or were otherwise exposed to Pease water found more than 1,500 had higher than normal levels of these chemicals in their blood. In 2016, the EPA established new lifetime health advisories for two PFAS known as PFOA and PFOS. While the risks associated with PFAS exposure are still being uncovered, studies have linked these chemicals to developmental effects, cancer and immune system dysfunction. New Hampshire families are gravely concerned about exposure to these potential harmful chemicals and what this means for their health and safety.

There is a critical need to understand and address any potential adverse health effects PFC water contamination may have on our communities. We appreciate your cooperation and efforts to work closely with the Portsmouth community thus far and request that you brief our offices regarding the ongoing remediation efforts and provide answers to the attached inquiries. We look forward to your timely reply and continuing to work with you on this important issue. If you have any questions on this matter please contact Mr. Bryan Maxwell at (202)-224-2841 or Bryan_Maxwell@shaheen.senate.gov or Mr. Andres Hoyos at (202) 224-3324 or Andres_Hoyos@hassan.senate.gov or Ms. Susan Mayer at (202) 225-5456 or Susan.Mayer@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Shaheen

Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

Maggie Hassan

Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator

Carol Shea-Porter

Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress



State of New Hampshire
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
CONCORD

July 31, 2017

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Senator Jeanne Shaheen

Senator Maggie Hassan

Congresswoman Carol Shea Porter

Re: Request for Assistance with Issues relating to Coakley Landfill Superfund Site and Pease Air Force Base

Dear Senator Shaheen, Senator Hassan and Congresswoman Shea Porter:

The undersigned legislators are requesting assistance from you obtaining information relating to the above referenced sites. We are specifically asking your assistance with the following:

- 1. Request: Your opinion on CERCLA Hazardous Classification of PFAS.**
Elevated levels, above New Hampshire ambient groundwater quality standards (AWQS) and the USEPA federal advisory limits, of perfluorinated chemicals (PFAS) have been detected in groundwater and surface water at both Coakley Landfill Superfund Site and the former Pease Air Force Base. We have been told that there are barriers to advancing remedial efforts at Coakley Landfill Superfund site and for health studies for those exposed to drinking the water at Pease Air Force Base because PFAS are not considered to be CERCLA hazardous waste. We request your opinion on this matter and whether our federal delegation can assist with moving this issue forward. In addition, if there is some state level legislation that can be filed to expedite either of these two issues, please advise us.
- 2. Request: Historical records regarding AFFF products used at Pease from 1970 to present.**
Although requested on several occasions the Air Force has not supplied information regarding historical use of aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) formulations at Pease Air Force Base. A recent publication found that about

25% of the PFAS in AFFF are unidentified and at least 40 classes of PFAS exist (Barzen-Hanson KA et. al., 2017). All stakeholders need to understand the components of the AFFF used at the base to evaluate remedial system effectiveness and ensure that the water is safe to consume from all wells, including the Smith and Harrison and other wells in the Portsmouth supply system, that are threatened by contaminant migration from Pease. It is also crucial to understand this prior to considering whether it is safe to consume water from the Haven well if plans include returning that well to distribution after treatment. This is of significant interest since we have a CDC-defined cancer cluster in our 5-town Seacoast area and we are currently assessing whether the selected remedial measure is effective at removing all PFAS that could be contributing to public health issues in this area. Therefore, we specifically request your assistance with obtaining historical records from the Air Force and other parties, as appropriate, relating to the formulation and manufacturer of AFFF products used at the former Pease Air Force Base from 1970 to present.

3. Request: Historical records for materials disposed at Coakley Landfill Superfund Site from the Air Force.

Since the Air Force was responsible for 20% of the responsibility of the clean-up at Coakley Landfill Superfund site and elevated levels of chemicals have been detected in site groundwater, we would like to formally request records of all materials disposed at Coakley Landfill through 1985 and the Rye landfills. This request includes but is not limited to all records of waste products, descriptions and container types as well as any analytical data available for the wastes disposed.

4. Request: Notify civilians, servicemen and dependents who lived at the base between 1970 and 1990 of the potential risk from drinking contaminated water while stationed at Pease.

Since the Air Force used AFFF at the former Pease Air Force base starting in 1970, we formally request that the Air Force inform all civilian and military personnel stationed at Pease from 1970 through 1990 (CB&I Federal Services, 2016). Previously, the Air Force stated that they notified personnel who were stationed at the base after 1990 since it was originally assumed that the PFAS contamination resulted from an accident on the airport. We now know that the PFAS contamination predated 1990.

5. Request: Air Force to post signs to alert the public about potential risks associated with swimming or fishing in waterways originating at Pease.

PFAS at levels more than AWQS (only tool to compare them to in New Hampshire) were detected in surface water samples collected by the Conservation Law Foundation in 2017 from several water bodies originating at Pease, respectively. Other states have issued advisories for fishing based on surface water quality concentrations. The Coakley Landfill Group (CLG) has recently been compelled to post advisories (and will do so in about a week) at Berry's Brook.

6. Request: Assess whether the public is at risk from eating fish or shellfish taken from waterways in contact with Pease surface water or storm water discharges.

The concentrations in most, if not all of these waterways, far exceed the no fish advisory that Michigan issued. Due to the nature of our tourist economy and shellfish and fishing industries in the seacoast we view this as a potential public health hazard that is not being addressed appropriately. However, the Air Force or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, N.H. Fish and Game, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) or New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NHDHHS) have not made any attempt, that we are aware of, to assess whether fish or shellfish are safe for the public to consume. This is a very concerning issue and we are requesting assistance from the federal delegation to move these issues forward in a more expedient manner.

7. Request: Characterize the extent of PFAS contamination water bodies that originate at Pease.

PFAS at levels more than AWQS (only tool to compare them to in NH) were detected in surface water samples collected by the Conservation Law Foundation in 2017 from several waterways originating at Pease. The Air Force nor NHDES have made any attempt, that we are aware of, to characterize the extent of PFAS contamination in these water bodies.

8. Request: Assess whether the public is at risk from eating livestock or deer in Newington, Portsmouth or Greenland.

Like (6) above, if wildlife including birds, deer and livestock are bio-accumulating high levels of PFAS this could also present a public health risk, if being used as a food source, that is not being addressed. The undersigned request assistance from the federal delegation with moving this issue forward.

9. Request: Identify, locate and sample historical water for PFAS.

On several occasions, Andrea Amico has asked the Air Force to investigate whether there is a historical source of water that can be sampled to give us an

idea of what PFAS concentrations were in the water source at some time in the past. She has been told that there is a holding tank somewhere on the base that could be used for this purpose. We are requesting assistance from the federal delegation with moving this request forward to action.

We feel that each of these issues requires expedited attention. In the case of Coakley Landfill, we are concerned about whether the full range of PFAS in private drinking water wells has been identified that could be causing cases of sarcomas and cancers in our children and adults. In addition, we are concerned that barriers to progress exist that would limit the ability to protect the citizens of North Hampton, Rye and Greenland from continued migration of PFAS in groundwater that will end up in their private wells. Public water supplies for the Towns of Hampton, Rye and the City of Portsmouth are also threatened by migration of PFAS from Coakley Landfill.

With respect to Pease, we are concerned that barriers exist that will prevent the health study from moving forward in the public exposed to elevated levels in their drinking water. In addition, we are concerned about the potential continued threat of unknown PFAS that have contaminated the water and may not be effectively treated by the Granular Activated Carbon system currently being used and planned for the final remedial system. As recently stated by NHDHHS, the rates of pediatric brain cancers in the 5-town area have increased to much higher than expected rates and we have recently lost another 9-year old child to brain cancer this past week. It is critical that we obtain as much information as we can as quickly as possible so that we can attempt to prevent another child from getting sick.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Representative Mindi Messmer at (603) 498-8847 or via email at mindi.messmer@leg.state.nh.us. Thank you for your consideration of these very important issues.

Sincerely;

Rep. Mindi Messmer – Rockingham District 24
Sen. Martha Fuller Clark – Rockingham District 21
Rep. Phil Bean – Rockingham District 21
Rep. Renny Cushing – Rockingham District 21
Rep. Jim McConnell – Cheshire District 12
Rep. Peter Somssich – Rockingham District 17