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Sent: Tuesday, February 26, 2019 3:03 PM
To: Jeff Ruch <jruch@peer.org>
Cc: Schena, Cristeen <Schena.Cristeen@epa.gov>; Eckhardt, Cayleigh <eckhardt.cayleigh@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: EPA-R1-2019-000285 - FOIAonline Issue Resolved

Jeff,

First, we would like to provide PEER with the following official EPA statement which is responsive to your modified request. EPA has shared this statement with other outside parties as well:

“EPA has been coordinating with the U.S. Department of Defense and Army to address PFOA/PFOS contamination from the former Fort Devens that has impacted drinking water in the Town of Ayer and the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone (Devens). The Town of Ayer and Devens, along with MassDEP, have been in close coordination with EPA and DOD about PFOA and PFOS as well as other per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in their water supplies. Ayer and Devens have taken proactive steps to protect their public drinking water supplies, including taking impacted wells offline and exploring other supply options and/or treatment of impacted wells.

To address this serious potential threat to public drinking water supplies, Army has recently made several important commitments. First, Army has committed to conduct a Time Critical Removal Action to address the contamination in Ayer’s Grove Pond Wells. Specifically, Army plans to coordinate closely and expeditiously with the Town and provide funding for installation of required treatment technology and future operation and maintenance of such technology. Second, Army committed to work as quickly as possible to determine and implement appropriate actions to address an interim discharge into Grove Pond that may need to continue until permanent PFOS/PFOA treatment is installed at the Ayer public drinking water system. Third, Army has committed to increase the frequency of sampling of the Devens drinking water wells. Army will continue with its remedial investigation in the area around the Devens wells and will consider the possibility of a CERCLA action if sampling data indicate the need for quicker actions at the Devens supply wells. The Region will support Army’s efforts to expedite its investigation work in this area. Finally, Army has made a commitment to provide alternate water in the form of bottled or bulk water, or through interconnection, if the quantity of water available to Ayer or Devens becomes insufficient.

EPA supports the Army’s commitment to both address PFOA and PFOS contamination affecting drinking water supplies in Ayer and Devens, and to work closely with the Towns, MassDEP, and EPA to find a lasting solution that protects public health in Massachusetts.”

Second, we continue to work on reviewing the documents potentially responsive to this request. Following your clarification of your request, we have been working on identifying non-responsive documents. As a result of this work, we have reduced our documents to review from over 16,000 records to just over 8,000. We will continue to review these documents. As you know, and as demonstrated by the above statement, the underlying matter that is the subject of your request is a significant demand on EPA staff. Those same staff are the ones working on processing your request. We appreciate your patience. At this time, we will commit to try to get you an additional interim response

within one month. Given the remaining voluminous amount of documents, however, we cannot forecast a change in the date for the final response – May 31, 2019.”

Thank you,
Mike

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