

Stephen Hoffman



From: ecomment@pa.gov
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 8:11 PM
To: Environment-Committee@pasenate.com; environmentalcommittee@pahouse.net;
 regcomments@pa.gov; Troutman, Nick; Glendon King; Franzese, Evan B.; Eyster, Emily;
 IRRC
Cc: c-jflanagan@pa.gov
Subject: Comment received - Proposed Rulemaking: Safe Drinking Water PFAS MCL Rule (#7-569)

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Re: eComment System

The Department of Environmental Protection has received the following comments on Proposed Rulemaking: Safe Drinking Water PFAS MCL Rule (#7-569).

Commenter Information:

Elisabeth Carpenter
 (elisabeth.a.carpenter@gmail.com)
 335 Righters Ferry Rd. Apt 340
 Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004 US

Comments entered:

My name is Elisabeth Carpenter. I have been a Registered Nurse since 2016, and most of my career has been spent as a Trauma ICU nurse. I moved from North Carolina to Pennsylvania in 2020. I recently decided to do local traveling, and I picked up a contract at a hospital in Abington, PA in a trauma ICU. I have worked there for 10 weeks.

I noticed that there were many patients coming in with brain tumors. I had never seen such a large number and across such a variety of demographics. The oldest was a patient in their 70s who was otherwise completely healthy and the youngest was one in their 20s who had his tumor accidentally discovered on a scan performed for a different reason. I did some research on carcinogens in Pennsylvania drinking water and connected some concerning dots that show we must set legal limits on carcinogens in our water. PFOAs and PFAs are known cancer causing substances. There is no legal limit on them in drinking water. It is crucially important that we establish a legal limit that ensures companies will lower these levels in our water. However, this alone will not keep our water safe from carcinogens. We must take further political action to ensure the water companies are testing for all known carcinogens in our water supply. And that they are not only testing for the legally defined limit, but ensuring this legal limit is in line with health guidelines surrounding safe human exposure.

The company that provides water to Abington, PA is Aqua America. This utility company currently provides water in 32 counties, serving 1.5 million people. The Environmental Working

Group (EWG), is a public health advocacy non-profit that compiled a national tap water database composed of contaminant testing data from every water utility in the country up until 2017. Their results for Aqua Pennsylvania come from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. EPA ECHO database. They found that while this water company did meet federal water guidelines, Pennsylvania water is contaminated with a percentage of contaminants ranging from 2.6 to 1,095% the recommended health guidelines. The potential effect of all these contaminants is cancer. Data from Bristol County, shows 26 contaminants, with PFOA levels at 1095% the recommended guideline. Hatboro county has 29 contaminants in the water, with 4x the recommended level of PFOS and 379x level of PFOAs. Shenango Valley has 22 contaminants with 80x the level of PFOAs And these are just the counties that Aqua America provides water to.

Since there is no legal limit on PFOAs and PFAs, Aqua America does not test for them at any of the places they provide water to in Pennsylvania. Their 2021 Pennsylvania Water Quality report does not mention them, and PFAs, along with numerous carcinogens, are in our drinking water, as evidenced by data provided by the EWG and backed by both state and federal EPAs. Access to safe, clean water is a legal necessity along with a human right. Moreover, every Pennsylvanian pays for water, and we deserve to pay for a quality product that is not going to give us and our loved ones cancer. Legal does not mean safe. We have to start passing legislation that is backed by the science and based on health guidelines. And we can start by placing a legal limit on the PFOAs and PFOs in our drinking water.

No attachments were included as part of this comment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Jessica Shirley

Jessica Shirley
Director, Office of Policy
PA Department of Environmental Protection
Rachel Carson State Office Building
P.O. Box 2063
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2063
Office: 717-783-8727
Fax: 717-783-8926
ecomment@pa.gov