



Craig W. Butler
Director



Maj. Gen. Mark E. Bartman
Adjutant General



Lance Himes
Director

November 16, 2017

Dear Members of Ohio's Congressional Delegation:

In early August, several Congressional members sent President Trump a letter regarding chemical contamination on military bases, urging the Department of Defense to more quickly address this issue. Maj. Gen. Bartman, Director Himes and I write you today to highlight the proactive work the State of Ohio has done to ensure clean drinking water for the communities near Ohio bases.

Between Sept. 2016 and Jan. 2017, Ohio EPA partnered with the Ohio Air National Guard (OANG), the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), and local health districts to sample ground water and private home owner's drinking water wells (private wells) at or near current or former portions of the following Ohio Air National Guard (OANG) facilities: Rickenbacker Air National Guard Base, Springfield-Beckley Municipal Airport, Mansfield Air National Guard Base, and Toledo Air National Guard Base.

The purpose of this preemptive sampling was to determine concentrations of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfate (PFOS) for private well users near bases and assess any potential health risks. PFOA and PFOS are chemicals that have been known to be used in aqueous film forming foam (AFFF), which had sometimes been applied to fight fuel-based fires at the airbases or for use in fire training. We recognized there was a potential risk of chemicals entering ground water, and ultimately into private drinking water wells during the tracking, usage or storage of the foam.

In 2009, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) had established a *provisional* health advisory level (HAL) based on the available information regarding the chemicals and possible exposure to them, and established a significantly lower *lifetime* drinking water HAL for PFOA and PFOS at 70 parts per trillion (ppt) in 2016.

Because of this newly established *lifetime* HAL, the National Guard Bureau (NGB) and the U.S. Air Force (USAF) scheduled testing for PFOA and PFOS at the four identified bases above in federal fiscal years 2017 and 2018. However, Ohio EPA, ODH and the OANG believed that private well testing needed to occur sooner than the FY 2017 and FY 2018 timeframe to ensure that drinking water near the bases was safe, so the State initiated its own sampling in 2016.

Any exceedances found through the state-initiated sampling above U.S. EPA's HAL that were confirmed by resampling were to be handled and remedied by the OANG. Remedies to reduce any health effect included: providing bottled water, installing water filtration equipment, or providing an alternative source of water, such as connecting to a public water system.

After sampling a total of 31 wells at or near the four bases, the State found only one residential well above the 70 ppt drinking water HAL. The OANG and local health department visited the Lucas County residence affected to explain the results and offer options. Cases of bottled water were provided immediately to serve as an alternative source of water. The OANG also set up a service contract to provide the home owner with a water dispensing unit with five-gallon bottles to be replenished as needed. The OANG is currently coordinating a contract effort with the

county sanitary engineer to offer the home owner connection to a municipal water system and abandon the current water well.

As is evident, Ohio has been very proactive in protecting public health and hopes this will alleviate your concerns with regards to chemical PFOA/PFOS contamination on OANG bases. We also hope our efforts can serve as a model to other states in being proactive about testing potentially harmful chemicals on and near military bases.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding either Ohio EPA or the Ohio Air National Guard's involvement in this matter, please contact Danielle Giannantonio at (614) 705-1016 or danielle.giannantonio@epa.ohio.gov and Alexander Lapso at (614) 336-7198 or alexander.d.lapso.nfg@mail.mil

Sincerely,



Craig W. Butler
Director, Ohio EPA



Major General Mark E. Bartman
Adjutant General, Ohio Air National Guard



Lance Himes
Director, Ohio Department of Health