From: Katie Bryant
To: 15ANCAC02B_SWTriRev_Comments_2021
Subject: [External] Clean Haw River and Pittsboro"s Children for Change
Date: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 4:41:01 PM

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August 3, 2021

Dear Members of the Environmental Management Commission,

We are Katie Bryant and Dr. Jessica Merricks, the co-founders of Clean Haw River, an organization dedicated to protecting the Haw River from environmental contaminants. We are also mothers who have chosen Pittsboro, NC as the place to raise our young families. Our main source of drinking water is surface water drawn from the Haw River, which has a long history of being polluted by upstream textile industries and sludge land application from Greensboro, Burlington and Reidsville, NC. We have confirmed with state agencies that our Pittsboro water source is used as a positive control in state research—this should alarm you.

For years, our families and friends in Pittsboro, NC have been ingesting 1,4 dioxane and PFAS via our drinking water supply, both of which regularly exceed health advisory limits.

We ***should*** be drinking water with a limit of 0.35 ug/L for 1,4-dioxane, putting us at a risk of 1:1,000,000 of developing cancer per the Clean Water Act. Instead, we fall between 1:10,000 and 1:1000 risk categories. **We have been exposed to this carcinogen due to the lack of drinking water regulations North Carolina so desperately needs.**

This July the Pittsboro water supply battled, yet again, another chemical dump of 1,4-dioxane into our drinking water supply by way of the Greensboro region where preliminary sampling results showed levels of the likely carcinogen ranged from 543 ug/L to 687 ug/L in the wastewater discharge into the Haw River. These concentrations moved downstream to Pittsboro where we were forced to turn off our supply. It has been over three weeks since this incident and the concentrations have yet to reach safe levels. In the meantime our entire town is being exposed to 1,4-dioxane and we have no idea what health effects this will have on us.

We need all surface water in North Carolina to be set to the same standards in order to eliminate the threat of industries discharging high concentrations upstream of water users like us. To reiterate, **we are demanding that the 0.35ug/L limit apply to all surface waters.**

Secondly, we are shocked that the EMC has left off PFAS for this review process. We want to encourage you to set PFAS limits we desperately need as a contaminated community. For years, our water samples have been used as a positive control in research studies and it has to stop now. We are a community suffering from many health complications that range from infertility, thyroid disease to rare cancers.

In a recent study, Pittsboro blood serum samples, (including my very own) maintained higher than the national average and showed a direct correlation to the Haw river water

concentrations. In 2018, NC state sampling revealed our collective PFAS levels were 1000 ppt. Currently, the EPA health advisory limit of 70 ppt for PFOS and PFOA does not apply to our population when any given day our water exceeds those limits and includes multiple PFAS chemicals, not just PFOS and PFOA. PFAS is a family of Flourinated compounds that range from 5000-8000 different types. Many of the PFAS compounds behave similarly, pose the same risk as PFOS and PFOA, and bioaccumulate. Based on collaborative research of 16 scientists, from June 2020- PFAS regulations should be managed at the class level to safeguard our water. We are a community overexposed, our blood serums are continually building up and our risks of developing cancer and other health risks are increasing. **We desperately urge the EMC for PFAS to be regulated collectively as a class and to not exceed 10 ppt**.

We urge you to consider our community, who has experienced decades of exceeding minimal exposure limits, and are at risk of overexposure multiple times every day. Your "lifetime of minimal exposure limit" does not apply to us. We are a vulnerable population. We deserve the safest standards possible. Set the standards with the most vulnerable communities in mind.

In closing, the cost to remove these compounds is far more than our small town can handle- 1,4 dioxane can only be eliminated with UV advanced oxidation and PFAS compounds are only completely removed with reverse osmosis. These systems are costly to install and maintain, and should not be the burden of our small town and its taxpayers. We needed action years ago. **This is our call to action for your agency to set standards that will protect us, our town, and our state by preventing industry from dumping volatile organic carcinogens into our waterway.**

Since the EMC's Triennial Review in late July, we have worked tirelessly to educate our community about our water crisis. We are pleased to share with you products of Pittsboro's youngest environmental activists (linked below). They have created beautiful, yet heartbreaking, letters and works of art to express their desire for clean water. Please take a moment to look at each one carefully. Each was created by a child who lives, goes to school, and enjoys leisure time with their families in Pittsboro. Every sip of water they drink from the town could threaten their chance to live healthy and happy lives. Our children deserve better. We urge you to do the right thing.

Sincerely,

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Katie Bryant, BS Microbiology | Jessica Merricks, PhD Biological Sciences
Clean Haw River Co-founders

Children for Change Letters and Artwork FINAL L...