



TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

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Supervisor

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October 25, 2017

Dear Wainscott Citizens' Advisory Committee,

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Suffolk Department of Health Services (SCDHS) have identified an area in Wainscott as a survey area for the testing of private water wells that may have PFC contamination. As your letter of October 16, 2017 indicates, the members of your committee have many questions regarding this situation. While I have provided answers to your specific questions below, I also wanted your members to be aware that the Town of East Hampton is working closely with our State and County partners to address and investigate this matter and provide detailed and accurate information to the community at large.

At the outset, you should be aware that the investigation of possible PFC contamination in the survey area is in the earliest stages. At the present, there are many more unknowns than knowns. The Town has encouraged our County and State partners to initiate and complete testing of private water wells as expeditiously as possible. Outreach to residents of the survey area and the testing of private wells in the area is ongoing. If the Committee knows of any households in the survey area that wish to have their private well tested, they should refer them to the SCDHS Office of Water Resources at (631) 852-5810. Wells will be tested by SCDHS free of charge.

The members of the Committee should also be aware that the Town of East Hampton has committed to making bottled drinking water available to all households on private wells in the survey area until such time that those wells have been tested and found to be safe. If any committee members are in the survey area and are in need of bottled water, they can contact the East Hampton Town Purchasing Department 631-324-4183 or email jcarroza@ehamptonny.gov.

While some public speculating as to the cause or source of any possible contamination is inevitable, such speculation can cause undue fear and tumult that can interfere with the ongoing outreach and testing. I urge the Committee to circulate only information released from official sources and refer any residents with concerns to the SCDHS or the Town.

While the answers below may not provide the complete or detailed responses the Committee would like, the answers are based on the information available from the Town at this time.

The initial question posed in the letter centered on whether private wells would be tested for Trichloroethylene (TCE). We have contacted SCDHS and they have advised us that TCE is being tested.

As for the numbered questions listed in the letter, the responses are as follows:

- 1.) Have all Wainscott residents who live in the affected area been notified?

We have been advised by the SCDH that they have expanded the number of properties to be tested from 91 to 269, based on the number of private wells within the survey area. Suffolk County Health Department has informed me that as of October 25 they have received 107 requests to schedule testing and inspections. SDHD has mailed letters to the 269 property owners and has made physical visits as well. Their decision to expand the number of wells was based upon better information on the number of private wells in the survey area.

- 2.) *What was the method of notification (e.g. regular mail, a notice placed in a prominent place on the resident's front door, private courier, etc.)?*

See answer #1 above.

- 3.) *How can a Wainscott resident who lives in the affected area correctly evaluate whether their activated carbon or reverse osmosis system is effectively removing PFOA and PFOS contaminants from their drinking water if they do not know the level of contamination? What if the combined contamination level of PFOA and PFOS, for example, exceeds the 1.5±30% µg/L level used to evaluate filter systems?*

You should refer all questions on how to evaluate the efficacy of filtration systems to the New York State Health Department. A helpful website may provide you further information:

https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/investigations/hoosick/docs/hoosick_pou_final.pdf

- 4.) *The SCDHS Advisory says that the Town will “provide bottled water to property owners in the private well survey area.” The Advisory does not specifically state that Wainscott residents within the affected area should not drink from their private wells. Is the SCDHS advising Wainscott residents living in the affected area –*
- a. *Not to drink from their private wells even if the water used for drinking is filtered (i.e. to drink only from bottled water)?*
 - b. *Not to provide drinking water drawn from their private well to pets?*
 - c. *Not to use water drawn from their private well to irrigate vegetable gardens or any plants from which they harvest food.*
 - d. *Not to swim in their swimming pool if it has been filled with water drawn from their private well?*

All inquiries as to the safety of water from private wells in the survey area should be directed to the SCDHS. They can be contacted at SCDHS Office of Water Resources at 631-852-5810.

- 5.) *What was the actual PFOA contamination level and the actual PFOS contamination level at the well which exceeded 0.07 ppb?*

Suffolk County only provided the Town of East Hampton with summary data that indicated that the well exceeded the limit.

- 6.) *When were samples taken from private wells for testing?*

Samples taken over past 4 weeks.

- 7.) *How many private drinking water wells were tested?*

As of Friday, October 24, 40 wells had been tested in the survey area, 1 well exceeded 70pb. , 15 were less than the advisory limit, 8 did not detect, and 16 are pending. There are currently an additional 67 requests for testing pending for a total of 107 of the 269.

- 8.) *Where are the private wells which were tested located in relation to –*
- a. *East Hampton Airport*
 - b. *Montauk Highway*
 - c. *Former sand mine site (unknown industrial uses)*
 - d. *Georgica Pond*
 - e. *Wainscott Pond*
 - f. *Wainscott School*

Location data of individual wells tested by SCDHS won't be provided to the Town of East Hampton by SCDHS for privacy reasons. Enclosed is a map of the current survey area.

- 9.) *Where is the well located that exceeded the EPA's standard of 0.07ppb? (An approximate location that does not reveal the exact address is acceptable.)*

Location data of individual wells tested by SCDHS won't be provided to the Town of East Hampton by SCDHS for privacy reasons.

- 10.) *What is the source and caused the PFC contamination?*

No determination has been made as to the source of any contamination.

- 11.) *Has the source and cause of the PFC contamination been removed?*

No determination has been made as to the source of any contamination.

- 12.) *For how long does SCDHS expect private wells within the affected survey area to remain unusable?*

The SCDHS has not provided an expectation or timetable on how long the outreach and testing process may take. The SCDHS should be contacted for advice on the usability of individual private wells in the survey area.

- 13.) *Do we know for certain that the East Hampton Airport was the sole source of the PFC contamination?*

No determination has been made as to the source of any contamination.

- 14.) *Is it possible that the source of the PFC contamination could be from nearby industrial uses or from within the former sand mine site? The former sand mine is approximately 71 acres in size and currently includes many varied uses (including a cement plant) and many varied past uses (e.g. furniture manufacturing and finishing). Please note that there are current uses within this site of which we are unaware due to the lack of an approved site plan. There are also most likely to be many unknown previous uses within this site for the same reason.*

No determination has been made as to the source of any contamination.

15.) *Can you provide a copy of the full test results for each well tested, please? (It is acceptable if the exact address and name is redacted.)*

Full test results for each well tested was not provided to the Town.

16. *If you're unable to provide a copy of the full test results for each well tested, is it required of the WCAC to submit a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request?*

FOIL requests for this information should be directed to the SCDHS who will respond.

17. *How was the southern boundary of the affected area determined?*

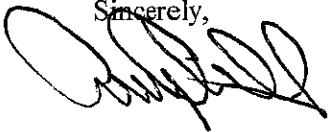
The Southern Boundary was determined by SCDHS based upon their knowledge of the direction of groundwater flows in the area.

18. *Can the Town/SCDHS confirm that there are no PFOA or PFOS contaminants outside the affected survey area as mapped in the Water Advisory, including in the area between the southern boundary and the Atlantic Ocean?*

No.

The Town of East Hampton will continue to work with both State and County governments to make sure that there is a full investigation and continued outreach and communication with the community.

Sincerely,



Larry Cantwell
Supervisor
Town of East Hampton