

July 24, 2017

Mr. Dominique Lueckenhoff, Acting Director
Water Protection Division
United States Environmental
Protection Agency, Region III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-2029

Dear Mr. Lueckenhoff:

Thank you for your letter dated April 12, 2017 regarding the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) continued concerns about Pennsylvania's Safe Drinking Water Program performance during the interim until the General Update and Fee rulemaking is promulgated and new staff are hired and trained.

As per our letter dated February 24, 2017, please consider this response as the Department's first quarterly update on the agency's progress with the action plan. This quarterly update covers the second quarter of 2017 (April – June).

1. **Sanitarian Staffing Levels:** The following table provides an update on the current staffing levels for sanitarians (field inspectors):

| | No. Sanitarians | No. Trainees | No. Vacancies | Total No. Positions |
|-----------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Feb. 2017 | 43 | 11 | 7 | 61 |
| June 2017 | 43 | 13 | 6 | 62 |

- During the April through June timeframe, the total number of sanitarian positions increased from 61 to 62.
 - The Department is in the process of filling the six remaining vacant positions.
2. **Interim Measures to Improve Program Performance:** The Department conducted the following activities during the April through June timeframe:

Several training events were delivered to ensure that new staff are being properly trained:

- The Department contracted with EPA and their contractors to deliver the Sanitary Survey Training course to 20 new staff (with < 1 year of service) on April 4 – 7,

2017. This course is intended to teach new staff how to conduct a sanitary survey.

- The Department developed and delivered a New Staff Training course to 38 staff (all with < 5 years of service, and 22 with < 1 year of service) on June 5 – 9, 2017. As a prerequisite, attendees were required to participate in several webinars on basic rule training. The classroom training built on the information provided in the webinars and included hands-on training and small group scenarios. Topics included the Groundwater Rule, the Revised Total Coliform Rule, verification of chlorine residual instrumentation, the nitrate MCL, Lead and Copper Rule compliance, data management, CT calculations, response to loss of positive pressure situations, the Disinfection Byproducts Rule, math lessons on chemical dosage, and a lab tour.

During this reporting period, the Department investigated available options for a temporary funding source to allow the agency to hire new staff sooner. Limited funds may be available in the Safe Drinking Water Fund, a restricted account within the General Fund that includes permit fees and penalties/fines, to support several new staff until the fee package is in place. Thus, we may be able to hire a few additional sanitarians beginning in FY 2017/2018. Additional updates will be provided as available.

Status of the Department's Action Plan:

| DEP Action Plan to Address Funding and Resource Shortfall and Improve Performance | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Item | Description | Anticipated Schedule | Status |
| 1 | Present proposed General Update and Fee rulemaking to EQB for approval to move forward | May 2017 | Completed May 17, 2017 |
| 2 | Publish proposed rulemaking in <i>PA Bulletin</i> for public comment | August 2017 | |
| 3 | Present final rulemaking to EQB for approval | January 2018 | |
| 4 | Publish final rulemaking in <i>PA Bulletin</i> | May 2018 | |
| 5 | Submit request to increase SDW Program complement | May 2018 | |
| 6 | Begin to hire and train new staff | September 2018 | |

The proposed rulemaking was approved by the EQB on May 17, 2017. The Department is currently addressing several questions that were received from the Office of Attorney

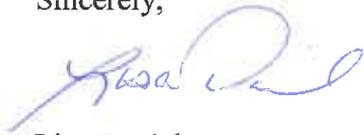
Mr. Dominique Lueckenhoff

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General. The Department anticipates that the proposed rulemaking will be published in the *PA Bulletin* for public comment in August.

If you have any questions about this quarterly report, please feel free to contact me by e-mail at ldaniels@pa.gov or by telephone at 717.787.9633. Our next quarterly report will be submitted by the end of September 2017.

Sincerely,



Lisa Daniels
Director
Bureau of Safe Drinking Water