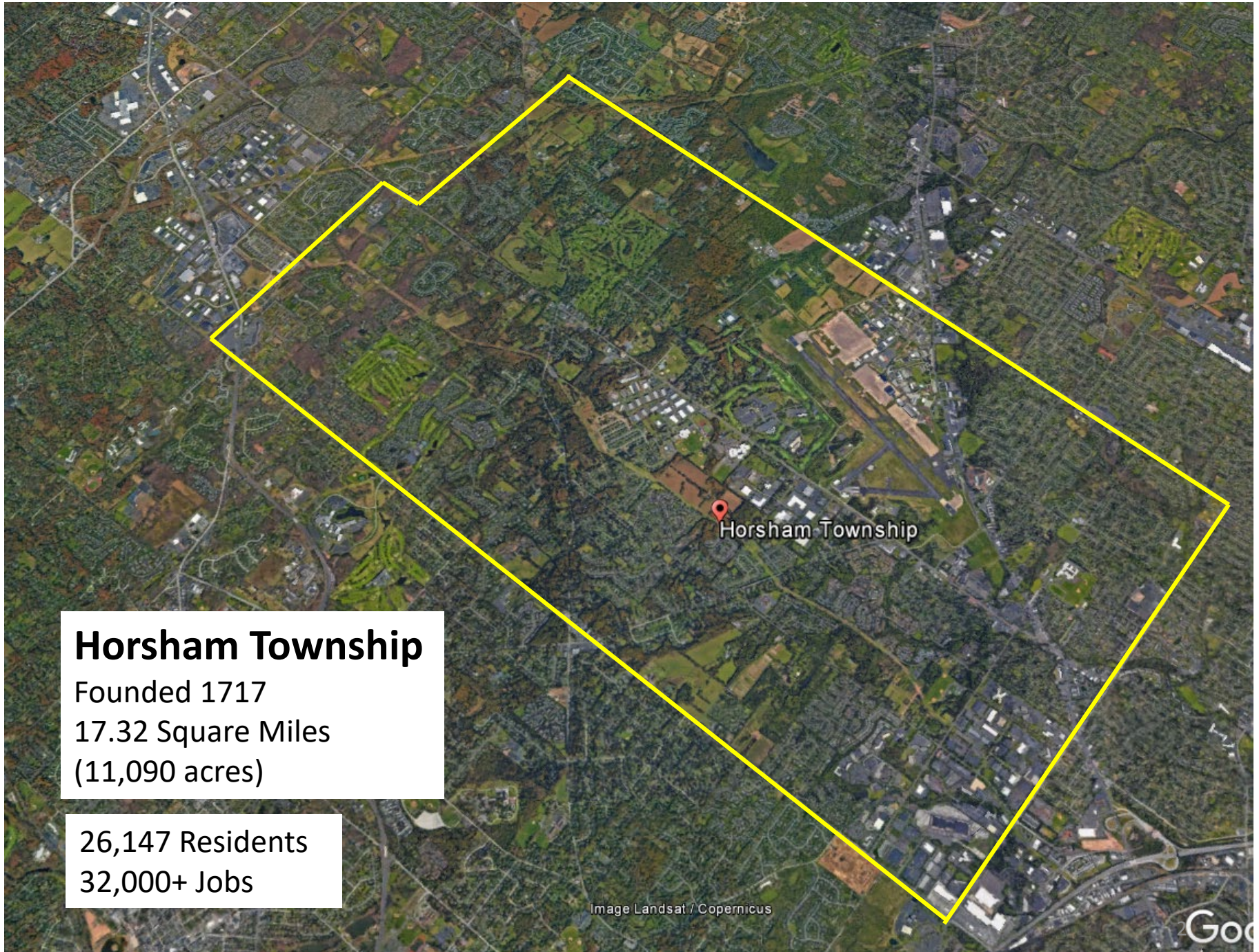




# HORSHAM

P E N N S Y L V A N I A





## **Horsham Township**

Founded 1717  
17.32 Square Miles  
(11,090 acres)

26,147 Residents  
32,000+ Jobs

Image Landsat / Copernicus

Go



Holocaust survivor, author  
Elie Wiesel dies at 87 News, B5

Holy Ghost Prep grad Jones  
signs with Indians Sports, C1

Financial Planning  
Proudly Spanning 2 Generations

AP  
Anthony Letsis  
& ASSOCIATES  
A BROKERS  
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# BUCKS COUNTY Courier Times

\$2.00 SUNDAY, JULY 3, 2016

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## PFOA, PFOS mainly limited to base communities

BY KYLE BAGENSTORF  
STAFF WRITER

Anxiety about the safety of drinking water in parts of Bucks and Montgomery counties continues to grow, as residents question whether their local water supplies have been tainted by chemicals.

The concern reached a feverish pitch last week, when a Facebook video posted by a local resident went viral. It urged residents of "Harbortown, Horsham, Warrington, Iyland, and Southampton" to stop drinking their water. As of Friday, the video had been viewed more than 250,000 times on Facebook. But is it true?



So far, drinking water contamination from perfluorinated compounds perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) has only been confirmed in levels above the amounts recommended by the federal Environmental Protection Agency in Horsham, Warminster and Warrington. Water authorities in those communities have been reacting to the contamination since 2014,

when the chemicals were first discovered in public wells.

The contamination is suspected to have originated from firefighting foams used on a trio of former and current military bases in those communities. The bases include the former Naval Air Station-Joint Reserve Base in Horsham, the former Naval Air Warfare Center in Warminster and the active Horsham Air Guard station.

Water in those systems is now below the EPA's new 70 part per trillion (ppt) health advisory level, although some question whether those levels are protective of

human health.

This news organization has determined the chemicals have also been found in lower levels in other Bucks County communities, and that some public wells in townships neighboring the affected areas haven't been tested.

The Horsham, Warminster, and Warrington water authorities rely on groundwater for the bulk of their water supply, as opposed to surface waters, like creeks or rivers. The systems use a series of wells to supply residents with water. The water from those wells is combined, so officials say each resident drinks the same water.

As PFOS and PFOA contamination above the EPA limits has been found in wells in those municipalities, the water authorities have taken them offline.

In 2014, eight public wells were taken offline in the three communities, based on the previous EPA advisory limit of 400 ppt for PFOA and 200 ppt for PFOS. After the EPA's recommended limit dropped to 70 ppt in May, the number of closed wells grew to 16 public wells. The number of affected private wells grew from 80 to about 150.

See WATER, Page A8

INQUIRER SPECIAL REPORT

## POISONING THE WELLS



Hope Grose and brother Chris Mattioli used to climb the fence near their Warminster home to play at the Naval Air Warfare Center. Grose says she drank the water there for years. "How long is it going to take to get out of my body?"

Two former Navy bases have been linked to tainted drinking water in three area townships. Residents seeking answers fear their health has been harmed.

BY JUSTINE McDANIEL and LAURA MCCRYSTAL | STAFF WRITERS

When the planes burned, the kids would come out. Hope Grose and her siblings would run down their Warminster street and ruberneck amid sizzling steam. They would watch Navy firefighters shoot a dense white foam from hoses, smothering the flames that leapt up from the fenced-off lot. When the blackened plane was cool, the children would climb the fence and jump into the burned-out cockpit, pretending to be pilots,

Grose recounted. The plane, and the field where the Navy conducted drills, was also a playground for the Kirk Road kids back in the 1970s and '80s. They did not know then that the firefighting foam could be toxic, or that it would seep into their drinking water. Now Grose wonders, like at least hundreds of others in Bucks and Montgomery Counties. Have we been poisoned? For decades, Navy personnel used the firefighting foam at hundreds of

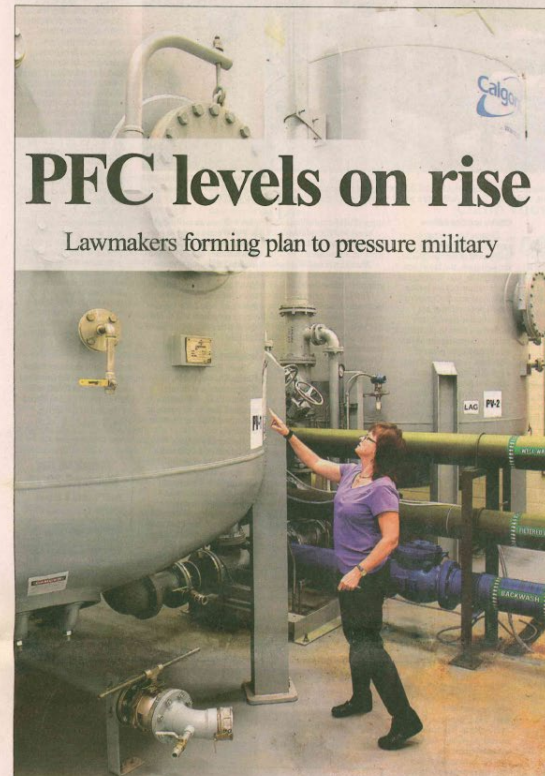
bases. Now they know that it contained chemicals linked to cancers, and that those chemicals flowed through the groundwater, into wells and out of the faucets of thousands of residents in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Two former bases just north of Philadelphia have become the first Navy sites linked to drinking water tainted by those chemicals. As the Department of Defense investigates others across the country, what happens here could help shape the response. See WATER on A16.

Starting in 2014, Horsham was spot-lighted by the media as a community with 'PFC' problems.

# BUCKS COUNTY Courier Times

\$1.50 FRIDAY-SATURDAY MAY 26-27, 2017

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## PFC levels on rise

Lawmakers forming plan to pressure military

Tina O'Flourka, business manager for the Horsham Water and Sewer Authority, looks over two new filtration tanks at the authority's filtration plant in Horsham. Each tank uses 20,000 pounds of carbon media to clean the water coming through it.

BY KYLE BAGENSTORF  
STAFF WRITER

As local lawmakers continue to pressure the military to do more to clean massive groundwater pollution near its bases in Bucks and Montgomery counties, contaminant levels appear to have increased in the past year. That's according to sampling data published by a number of affected water utilities.

Since the PFOS and PFOA contamination was first discovered in 2014, 16 public drinking wells, serving tens of thousands of residents, have been closed in Warminster, Warrington, and Horsham. Those wells were closed because they exceeded 70 parts per trillion



(ppt) of the chemicals, the limit designated as safe by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Additionally, water provider Aqua Pennsylvania continues to keep a close eye on about two dozen of its wells throughout the region. Only one near the military bases, in Harbortown, has been closed so far. Sampling data from the water authorities show

that levels have increased, if only slightly, in 15 of 17 wells belonging to Horsham, Warminster, Warrington, and Aqua Pennsylvania. No wells above the 70-ppt safety limit are currently providing water to area residents. Five of the Horsham Water and Sewer Authority's nine drinking wells have been taken offline due to

contamination. Testing data show increases in each of the four remaining wells between May 2016 and April 2017. The increases were of approximately 7, 8, 8, and 10 ppt, with the most contaminated well showing 29 ppt in May of this year.

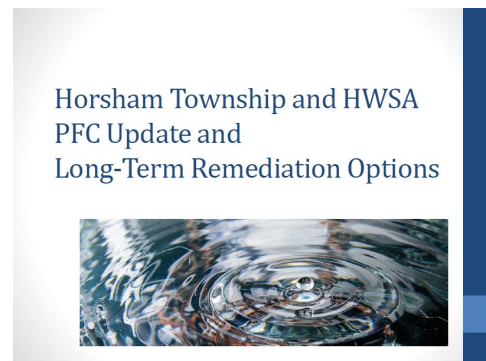
Three of eight public wells in Warrington remain online. From May 2016 to April 2017, data show levels increased in two of those wells: one from 19 ppt to 24 ppt, and another from 19.6 ppt to 23 ppt. The third decreased, from 20.9 ppt to 17 ppt. Warminster has six wells that have exceeded the EPA advisory level, and does

See PFC, Page A2

In the summer of 2016, after the EPA reduced the HAL to 70 PPT, Horsham Council, the Water and Sewer Authority and the residents had lost faith in following an EPA standard. Instead, Horsham Council and the HWSA took decisive and proactive steps to enact **“The Horsham Standard”** of non-detect levels of PFOS/PFOA in the public water supply. By April 2017, Horsham achieved this objective and has continued to maintain this standard.

## Horsham Township’s Plan has four distinct components:

- **Education**
- **Communication**
- **Remediation**
- **Compensation**



## Reminders:

- **Our citizens are being unfairly impacted.**
- **The Horsham Water and Sewer Authority was forced to add a PFAS surcharge on all customer's bills.**
- **The lack of redevelopment on the former base due to the contamination has negatively affected our credit rating.**
- **The former base is 8% of our community. It is highly visible. It's fast becoming an 862 acre abandoned, decaying property.**

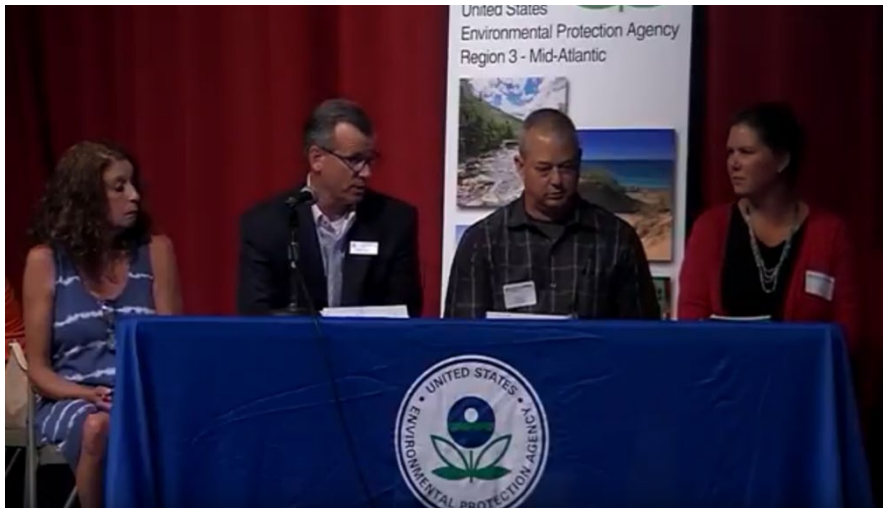
## Our Concerns:

- **Lack of organized coordination. There should be one coordinated response from the U.S. Department of Defense. Currently we are dealing with Navy, Air National Guard and the Air Force.**
- **Private well owners (over 100) have been hit hard and are most affected.**
- **Our veterans and former base employees must not be forgotten.**



## Recommendations:

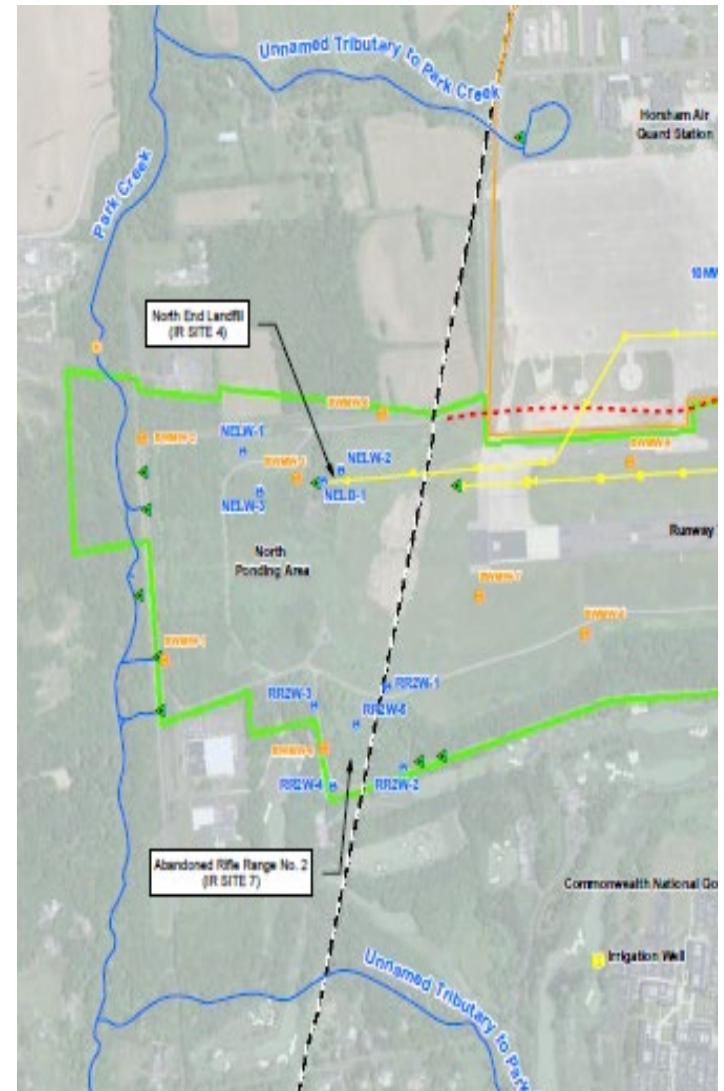
- PADEP should permit alternative treatment, such as resin, for permanent treatment systems.



- Horsham should be included in **any** health study and/or blood testing that the Commonwealth is involved in

# Recommendations (cont'd)

- Stormwater leaving the former Naval Air Station –Joint Reserve Base Willow Grove and the Horsham Air Guard Station has PFOA/PFOS levels above the EPA LHAL
- Much of the stormwater enters Park Creek which likely impacts down stream drinking water sources in other communities
- We believe more could be done at the State level to stop these contaminants from entering the waterways of the Commonwealth





## Recommendations (cont'd)

- DEP work more promptly in permitting filters so that the public wells can get online faster, providing a positive direct impact
- Consider increased collaboration and pooling of resources with other states such as NJ, MI, NY, VT, etc. to avoid too much duplicity and avoid a lack of coordination

## Recommendations (cont'd)

- Establish a State-wide standard, not a Horsham standard, not a Montgomery County standard, not a Southeast PA standard but a State wide standard for all.
- We need the Commonwealth's voice. We need your voice to join us to get the Federal Government to reimburse our citizens, to pay for all future costs, to control the stormwater coming off Base, to clean up the contamination 100%, and to test and study our residents and former workers of the Base.



# Thank you!

- Governor Wolf and his Action Team
- PA Representative Todd Stephens
- PA Senator Maria Collett
- U.S. Senator Robert Casey
- U.S. Senator Patrick Toomey
- U.S. Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick
- U.S. Congressman Brendan Boyle
- U.S. Congresswoman Madeleine Dean

- U.S. Navy
- National Guard
- EPA Region 3
- PADEP Southeast Region



**HORSHAM**  
P E N N S Y L V A N I A