

HORSHAM TOWNSHIP



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COUNCIL

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WILLIAM T. WALKER
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

RICHARD SABOL
FINANCE DIRECTOR

September 15, 2016

The Honorable Ashton Carter
Secretary of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Mr. Secretary,

The Horsham Water and Sewer Authority (the Authority) Board recently approved a surcharge on all water customers to fund the implementation of a \$1.2 million per year short-term remediation plan approved by Horsham Township Council in June. The short term plan addresses the unacceptable levels of Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) in the public water supply resulting from U.S. Department of Defense activities on the former Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NASJRB) and the Horsham Air Guard Station. The surcharge will help cover the Authority's costs to improve its water quality and purchase a larger amount of water from the North Wales Water Authority in order to provide its customers with safe water. Based on current operating costs, purchased water costs four to five times more than water produced through the Authority's public supply wells.

This surcharge, which goes into effect today (September 15), places a tremendous and unacceptable financial burden on the Authority's customers, and they should not bear the responsibility of paying for it. Although the U.S. Navy has committed to paying for filters for those wells which exceed the EPA health advisory of 70 ppt., the Authority and Horsham Township Council feel strongly that the residents of Horsham are entitled to water that is free of PFOS and PFOA, and that the military has an obligation to fully remediate the local groundwater resources.

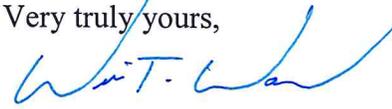
To that end, Horsham Township Council unanimously approved a resolution at its meeting last evening that calls for the Department of Defense to fully reimburse Horsham Township and the Horsham Water and Sewer Authority for all costs and expenses associated with the treatment of perfluorinated compounds from the ground water and surface water in Horsham Township to include the cost of implementing the short-term remediation plan that has resulted in the surcharge to be levied on the Authority's customers.

Our only interest is prompt remediation of the PFCs. We ask that you take a leadership role and accept responsibility for the contamination of the public and private water supplies regardless of the concentration level.

We remain committed to ensuring the ongoing safety of our community's water supply and will continue to be vigilant in recovering all costs associated with this contamination.

We thank you for your careful attention to this letter and ask for a prompt response.

Very truly yours,



William T. Walker
Township Manager

Cc: The Honorable Robert P. Casey, Jr.
The Honorable Patrick J. Toomey
The Honorable Patrick Meehan
The Honorable Brendan F. Boyle
The Honorable Michael G. Fitzpatrick
Governor Tom Wolf
The Honorable Stewart J. Greenleaf
The Honorable Todd Stephens
The Honorable Deborah Lee James, U.S. Air Force
The Honorable Ray Mabus, U.S. Navy
General Joseph Lengyel, National Guard Bureau
Members of Township Council
Tina M. O'Rourke, HWSA Manager

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-29

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF THE HORSHAM COUNCIL DEMANDING THAT THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE REIMBURSE HORSHAM TOWNSHIP AND THE HORSHAM TOWNSHIP WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY FOR ALL COSTS AND EXPENSES ASSOCIATED WITH THE TREATMENT OF PERFLUORINATED COMPOUNDS FROM THE GROUND WATER AND SURFACE WATER IN HORSHAM TOWNSHIP

WHEREAS, Horsham Township proudly hosted the United States Military at the Willow Grove Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base and Air Force/Air National Guard Base for sixty-nine years (“NASJRB”); and

WHEREAS, in 2014 it was discovered that, as a result of the military activities on the NASJRB, there existed in the groundwater and surface water of Horsham Township certain perfluorinated compounds (“PFCs”); and

WHEREAS, PFCs are emerging contaminants, and the precise impact on the health of our residents has not been fully determined; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense has determined that it will reimburse the Horsham Water and Sewer Authority only for treatment of potable water sources in which PFC levels exceed the current EPA lifetime health advisory of 70 parts per trillion; and

WHEREAS, Horsham Township Council and the Horsham Water and Sewer Authority have determined that it is necessary and appropriate to treat all groundwater and surface water to reduce the PFCs to a level of one part per trillion (“Horsham Treatment Standard”); and

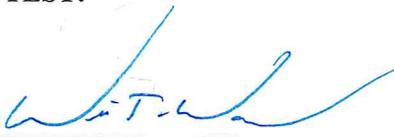
WHEREAS, reducing levels of PFCs to the Horsham Treatment Standard will cause great expense to Horsham Township and the Horsham Township Water and Sewer Authority, which expense may ultimately be borne by the Horsham taxpayers and rate payers of the Horsham Water and Sewer Authority; and

WHEREAS, Horsham Township Council has determined that the United States Department of Defense is obligated to restore the surface water and groundwater of Horsham Township to the condition in which it found those waters when military operations began in our community;

NOW THEREFORE, the Horsham Township Council does hereby demand that the United States Department of Defense reimburse Horsham Township and the Horsham Township Water & Sewer Authority, on behalf of its ratepayers, for all costs and expenses associated with the treatment of PFCs to the Horsham Treatment Standard.

SO RESOLVED this 14th day of September, A.D., 2016.

ATTEST:



William T. Walker, Manager

TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
TOWNSHIP OF HORSHAM

By: 

Deborah M. Tustin, President