



**Drinking Water Quality Institute
PFOA Public Hearing Comments
Doug O'Malley, Director
November 21, 2016**

A three-hour long meeting on September 22 by the NJ Drinking Water Quality Institute (DWQI) presented in minute detail the scientific underpinnings of the recent announcement by the Institute to propose the toughest standard in the country for PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid, which was originally used in Teflon & other non-stick appliances) for drinking water in New Jersey of 14 parts per trillion. The extensive health impacts study showed the detailed analysis on why the Institute was recommending a health protective standard and the weakness of the current EPA standard of 70 parts per trillion.

After the conclusion of the public comment period today, and upon the hopeful finalization of the standard, the recommendations will be passed along to NJDEP, where their fate will rest with DEP Commissioner Bob Martin. We urge DEP Commissioner Martin to support this clearly health protective standard. Over the entire tenure of the Christie Administration, not one recommendation by the Drinking Water Quality Institute has been adopted. This streak has led to the introduction of Senate legislation by Sen. Ray Lesniak to compel NJDEP to adopt the recommended standards for 16 known contaminants in New Jersey's drinking water that the NJDEP has failed to take action on.

PFOA is a slowly-moving crisis for New Jersey's drinking water. This is the equivalent of having Toms River Ciba Geiby-like low-level contamination piped right into our drinking water taps. DWQI's report should be a terrifying wake-up call to for a more health-protective PFOA standard, especially for young mothers and infants.

It has been more than a decade that DEP has known of PFOA in our drinking water. In 2006, concentrations of 64 parts per trillion were discovered in the Penns Grove water supply. New Jersey has the worst levels of PFOA in the country. A recent Environmental Working Group report documented that 1.3 million New Jersey residents have drinking water with elevated PFOA levels. NJDEP's own study from 2006 showed that in 23 New Jersey drinking water systems, there were elevated levels in 65% of the samples.

There is a clear need to have the strongest standard in the country. The science is clear and it is time for DEP Commissioner Bob Martin to follow the science of the Drinking Water Quality Institute once they propose a final standard.

There is no precedent for this action because New Jersey needs to have strongest standards in the country. It is clear that the EPA PFOA standard is not health protective and the science of the DWQI will hopefully be a national wake up call for stricter water quality standards.

The science has developed over the last decade that this should be a firebell on our faucets. PFOA is a non-natural, indefinitely persistent chemical contaminant in our drinking water supply. It's the chemical that won't leave, and it can take up to eight years to exit our bodies.

The Drinking Water Quality Institute documented the multitude of health risks from PFOA, including liver, bladder and testicular cancers, as well as developmental impacts for young infants. Specifically, the report documented how the contaminant was discovered in umbilical cord blood, breast milk, seminal fluid and infant blood, and how PFOA levels rise in infants over the first 4 months of their lives.

We are poisoning our children at low levels. NJDEP needs to listen to the science and adopt the strongest possible standards in the country. The third report reviewed by Institute also documented how currently available carbon and reverse osmosis filters can eliminate this threat of contamination. We thank the Drinking Water Quality Institute for their groundbreaking research and we hope this can serve as a call to action for the NJDEP.