June 10, 2020

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL URGES EPA TO PROTECT DRINKING WATER FROM TOXIC "FOREVER" CHEMICALS

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul, as part of a coalition of 22 attorneys general, today submitted comments to the U.S. Environmental Protect Agency (EPA) supporting the agency's plan to regulate perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. PFOS and PFOA are two members of a broad class of substances commonly known as PFAS. The states also asked the EPA to propose final drinking water standards for those specific chemicals and other PFAS that reflect current science and protect human health.

"As the nation continues to fight the impact of a global respiratory pandemic, we must act to protect residents from the dangers of pollutants and chemicals that accumulate in the body over time, causing potentially serious health problems," Raoul said. "I am committed to protecting Illinois' water sources and ensuring that federal regulations help our residents access safe water."

PFAS are commonly called "forever" chemicals because they resist degradation in the environment and accumulate in the body over long periods of time. These contaminants may be linked to serious adverse health effects in humans and animals. Human health effects associated with exposure to PFOA may include kidney and testicular cancer, thyroid disease, liver damage, and preeclampsia. Exposure to PFOS is associated with immune system effects, changes in liver enzymes and thyroid hormones, and other conditions.

Across the country, PFAS contamination is most often associated with military bases, training centers for firefighters, civilian airports and industrial facilities. PFAS chemicals tend to be persistent in the environment and have been used for decades as ingredients in firefighting foam and many common consumer products. Some states with significant PFAS contamination are currently spending millions of dollars to address the contamination in public drinking water systems, and to investigate numerous areas and sources of potential contamination.

In the letter, Raoul and the coalition state, "[…] without treatment, PFOA and PFOS contamination will continue to worsen and will persist in drinking water sources indefinitely.

Due to the harmful effects of PFOA and PFOS in drinking water, swift promulgation of stringent final drinking water standards is crucial to enable EPA to take effective regulatory enforcement actions to address PFAS contamination."

Joining Raoul in filing the comments are the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.

Appendix A

New Hampshire[6]	Safe Drinking Water Standards	PFHxS PFNA PFOS PFOA	18 11 15 12
New Jersey[7]	Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs)	PFNA PFOA PFOS	13 14 13
New York[8]	Proposed MCLs	PFOA PFOS	10 10
North Carolina[9]	Drinking Water Health Goal	GenX	140
Ohio[10]	Drinking Water Action Levels	PFOA, PFOS GenX PFBS PFHxS PFNA	70 (limit for combined total concentration of PFOA and PFOS) 700 140,000 140 21

[6] New Hampshire Department of Health Services, *Update on New Hampshire PFAS Drinking Water Standards (MCLs)* (Jan. 10, 2020), https://www4.des.state.nh.us/nh-pfas-investigation/?p=1185.

[7] New Jersey Drinking Water Quality Institute, *Health-Based Maximum Contaminant Level Support Document: Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS)* (2018), https://www.state.nj.us/dep/watersupply/pdf/pfos-recommendation-appendix-a.pdf; New Jersey Drinking Water Quality Institute, *Health-Based Maximum Contaminant Level Support Document: Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA)* (2017), https://www.state.nj.us/dep/watersupply/pdf/pfoa-appendixa.pdf; N.J. ADMIN. CODE § 7:9C app Table 1 (2018).

[8] New York Department of Health, *Drinking Water Quality Council Recommends Nation's Most Protective Maximum Contaminant Levels for Three Unregulated Contaminants in Drinking Water* (Dec. 2018), https://www.health.ny.gov/press/releases/2018/2018-12-18_drinking_water_quality_council_recommendations.htm; Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to amend Subpart 5-1 of Title 10 (Health) of the Official Compilation of Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York, available at: https://regs.health.ny.gov/sites/default/files/proposed-regulations/Maximum%20Contaminant%20Levels%20%28MCLs%29.pdf; and Notice of Revised Rulemaking, available at: https://regs.health.ny.gov/sites/default/files/proposed-regulations/Maximum%20Contaminant%20Levels%20%28MCLs%29_0.pdf.

[9] North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, *Questions and Answers Regarding North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Updated Risk Assessment for GenX (Perfluoro-2-propoxypropanoic acid)*, https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/oee/pfas/NC%20DHHS%20Health%20Goal%20Q&A.pdf.

[10] Ohio Department of Health & Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, *Ohio Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Action Plan for Drinking Water* (2019), https://epa.ohio.gov/Portals/28/documents/pfas/PFASActionPlan.pdf.