

News Release

Region 2 - New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands



EPA Expands offer to Pay Water Costs for Towns

Contact: Kristen Skopeck (518) 747-4389; skopeck.kristen@epa.gov

(New York, N.Y. – April 26, 2010) In response to concerns raised by the towns of Halfmoon and Waterford about using Hudson River water as their source of drinking water while the dredging project proceeds, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced today that it has agreed to pay the additional cost incurred to draw water from the Troy system until November 2012. The Agency is overseeing a precedent-setting cleanup to reduce levels of Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) in river sediments, which are damaging the environment. The Agency will cover the towns' incremental water costs full-time through the end of the dredging season in 2012. EPA will also pay for the extra costs during all of the remaining dredging seasons until the Hudson dredging is complete.

“Our decision to cover the extra cost of drawing water from Troy on a full time basis will eliminate any cause for concern about drinking water in these towns,” said Judith Enck, EPA Regional Administrator. “EPA shares the goal of communities along the Hudson – to work for a healthier, cleaner Hudson – and we are taking this step in order to err on the side of caution.”

Before the end of the 2012 dredging season, EPA will make a decision about whether to continue to pay for water full-time during the remaining off-seasons or pay for water on a more limited basis during those off-seasons. In order for EPA to make that decision, the Agency will need to gather more data about any impact of the dredging activities on off-season PCB levels in the Upper Hudson.

Last month, when the river had unusually high flow, some samples taken at the Thompson Island monitoring station were reported to have exceeded EPA's drinking water standard of 500 parts per trillion for PCBs. The Agency is looking more closely at those results because it has ongoing concerns about the accuracy of the sampling data gathered by GE during the high flows. This month, EPA discovered that the five sampling intakes used by General Electric to collect water samples at the Thompson Island monitoring station were covered with mud and vegetation. This may very well have compromised the

results and they may not have been representative of water column concentrations in the Hudson River water at that location.

EPA also operates a carbon treatment system for the Village of Stillwater to ensure that drinking water from its wellfield is not affected by the dredging. This is a temporary measure which will continue until the Village connects to the Saratoga County water system. EPA is in discussions with GE over the responsibility for the cost of that connection.

The first phase of dredging in the river was completed last fall and EPA and General Electric completed technical reports that evaluate the results of the Phase 1 dredging work. A scientific peer review process to evaluate the two reports is in progress and EPA will consider the results of that process as it develops a plan for the second phase of the project by the end of this summer. More information about the peer review process can be found by visiting <http://www.epa.gov/hudson/>.

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