



BRUNSWICK COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS

Environmental Protection Agency
Office of the Administrator 1101A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Oct. 30, 2023

Administrator Michael S. Regan,

I am writing on behalf of the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners and our community with concerns about Chemours' intent to resume imports of GenX from the Chemours Netherlands B.V. plant in Dordrecht, Netherlands, to the Chemours Fayetteville Works plant in Bladen County, North Carolina, in response to the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recent reauthorization of waste exports issued Sept. 8, 2023.

We appreciate that the EPA continues to study the harmful effects of PFAS, including GenX, and the continued research conducted for health advisory and maximum contaminant levels in drinking water. We also support the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality's (NCDEQ) 2019 Consent Order that required Chemours to build the barrier wall in the Cape Fear River near the Fayetteville Works plant and provided more adequate and responsive measures to sample drinking water wells in our area.

However, even with these requirements, we still have concerns about how Chemours is handling GenX at the Fayetteville site and how their previous misconduct in GenX and PFAS waste disposal has posed a risk to the health of Brunswick County residents and the environment. We feel EPA should consider these concerns and reassess the allowed number of imports approved in the recent authorization.

We have also listed some recommendations for EPA that would provide much needed transparency and accountability moving forward.

BRUNSWICK COUNTY'S CONCERNS

- **The unknown environmental impact from these imports unfairly burdens our water customers and residents.** Brunswick County has already issued \$167.3 million worth of revenue bonds to install a low-pressure reverse osmosis treatment system to remove PFAS and expand capacity at our main Northwest Water Treatment Plant. All of Brunswick County's water customers receive either all or part of their water supply from this plant. The rapidly growing population in Brunswick County also makes our reliance on this plant and the Cape Fear River as a source of drinking water ever more important. Additionally, the discovery of GenX and other PFAS in several private drinking water wells over the past 1.5 years as part of NCDEQ's consent order has affected several Brunswick County residents who were not aware that these compounds were in their drinking water.
- **Previous improper waste disposal by Chemours is still present in the Cape Fear River.** Brunswick County has conducted weekly PFAS tests at the Northwest Water Treatment Plant since June 2017. We know the prevalence of these compounds in the river is still high to this day because of this extensive testing. Even with the construction of the barrier wall at Chemours' Fayetteville Works facility, the damage is done. The presence of PFAS compounds already in the riverbed and river water will continue to impact downstream communities like ours for years to come. Our only hope of avoiding these compounds in our drinking water is to install expensive advanced water treatment systems like reverse osmosis—at the County's and rate payers' expense.

BRUNSWICK COUNTY'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Ensure Chemours has significantly reduced the amount of PFAS entering the Cape Fear River before allowing more PFAS in the state.** The construction of the barrier wall at the Fayetteville Works facility was only finished this June—which was still several months later than the consent order mandated. More time is needed to ensure the barrier wall is effectively stopping PFAS from entering the river in accordance with the rules NCDEQ has issued in the consent order before more GenX is shipped in from abroad to the facility.
- **Hold Chemours accountable to future changes to health advisory levels or maximum contaminant levels.** EPA must ensure that Chemours' waste disposal is properly handled and does not exceed the health advisory goals or future maximum contaminant levels the EPA or NCDEQ sets for any PFAS compounds.
- **Include NCDEQ in the process when considering future authorizations.** NCDEQ needs to have information about imports of PFAS in North Carolina to ensure Chemours meets all state and federal regulations regarding waste disposal before importing more PFAS to North Carolina. EPA and NCDEQ should also ensure adequate testing is performed to determine what environmental impacts these imports may have in North Carolina.

Brunswick County residents, like all North Carolina and U.S. residents, deserve access to clean drinking water. All residents who source their water from the Cape Fear River and a growing number of residents who source their water from drinking water wells are affected by Chemours' pollution and have yet to see the company fulfill NCDEQ's 2019 Consent Order.

Thank you for allowing us time to share our concerns and recommendations with your office. We appreciate your continued dedication to protecting North Carolinians from environmental contamination issues. Please reach out to me or Brunswick County's administration with any questions or opportunities for collaboration on this issue.

Respectfully,



RANDELL (RANDY) THOMPSON

Brunswick County Chairman of the Board
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CC: NCDEQ Secretary Elizabeth Biser
U.S. Senator Thom Tillis
U.S. Senator Ted Budd
U.S. Representative David Rouzer
N.C. State Senator Bill Rabon
N.C. State Representative Frank Iler
N.C. State Representative Charles Miller
Brunswick County Vice Chairman Mike Forte
Brunswick County Commissioner Marty Cooke
Brunswick County Commissioner Pat Sykes
Brunswick County Commissioner Frank Williams
Brunswick County Manager Steve Stone
Brunswick County Deputy County Manager David Stanley
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Brunswick County Attorney Bob Shaver
Brunswick County Public Utilities Director John Nichols
Brunswick County Health Services Director David Howard
Brunswick County Communications Director Meagan Kascsak
Brunswick County Clerk to the Board Daralyn Spivey