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REP. PASCRELL, SEN. LAUTENBERG APPLAUD AGREEMENT TO TEST FOR AND MITIGATE ADDITIONAL CONTAMINANTS AT POMPTON LAKES PROPERTIES

Resources available to mitigate contaminated soil vapor beneath 439 homes in the “plume,” 24 properties in the buffer zone

WASHINGTON – Calling it a significant response to Pompton Lakes residents concerned about groundwater affected by a DuPont works facility, U.S. Rep. Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ-8) and U.S. Senator Frank R. Lautenberg (D-NJ) today lauded an agreement reached by the EPA, NJDEP and the DuPont Company that enables residents of the soil vapor plume area and the “buffer zone” to test for and mitigate a total of 61 possible contaminants at their properties. Previously, residents could only receive help in testing and mitigating their properties if the 10 chemicals attributed to DuPont’s contamination were found.

“This is a great response to the many Pompton Lakes residents who reached out to our offices seeking help. The EPA and NJDEP acknowledge that what these Pompton Lakes residents need most is information and action,” said Pascrell, who this year has brokered two meetings with borough residents and EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson and NJDEP officials. “This agreement will encourage residents to obtain the sub-slab soil vapor testing with the assurance that if there is contamination, it will be mitigated.”

“The residents of Pompton Lakes have a right to know whether their home environment is safe,” said Lautenberg, who is Chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee that oversees toxics and environmental health. “This new agreement will provide much-needed answers about the safety of their homes and I will continue to work with my colleagues to improve environmental quality in Pompton Lakes.”

The agreement responds to numerous requests made by borough residents to the EPA and NJDEP, as well as the offices of Rep. Pascrell and Sen. Lautenberg and U.S. Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ). In September, Rep. Pascrell spoke with EPA Regional Administrator Judith Enck and advocated for the expansion of the list of chemicals to be detected and mitigated.

DuPont had previously agreed to mitigate contamination from beneath the more than 400 homes within the plume by installing soil vapor mitigation systems. For the 24 properties in the “buffer zone” outside of the plume, DuPont agreed to install the systems at properties where any of the 10 chemicals it was responsible for were detected.

The agreement reached by the EPA, NJDEP and DuPont addresses those cases in which none of DuPont’s 10 contaminants have been detected but any number of 51 possible other contaminants

have been found. If indoor air testing at a given property confirms that the same contaminants are at levels above the DEP indoor air screening levels then the mitigation systems will be installed at that property. Testing and mitigation at these homes will be funded through the New Jersey Spill Fund.

E.I. DuPont Company conducted operations at 2000 Cannonball Road from 1902 to April 1994, when the facility closed. DuPont manufactured lead azide, aluminum, or bronze shelled blasting caps and operated processes producing metal wires, aluminum and copper shells. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and the EPA require cleanup of the facility.

In May 2008, EPA and NJDEP received data from DuPont documenting soil gas concentrations elevated above the latest soil gas screening levels in an off-site plume that had emanated from the site into a residential area of Pompton Lakes. In June 2008, EPA and NJDEP approved DuPont's plan to install vapor mitigation systems in all structures potentially impacted by the plume and conduct additional vapor and ground water investigation. There are 439 structures present in the vapor mitigation area. In November 2009, EPA and NJDEP required DuPont to conduct additional evaluation of potential groundwater treatment technologies to remediate the off-site plume of volatile organic compounds.

In December 2009, a report was released by the NJ Department of Health and Senior Service showing an increased incidence of certain types of cancer amongst residents of Pompton Lakes where the groundwater was contaminated. The report did not specify a causal relationship between the environmental exposure and the higher incidences of certain cancer, although historically some of the particular chemicals found in the plume have been found to increase the risks of both of those diseases. Last year, Pascrell, Lautenberg and Menendez demanded that "the situation in Pompton Lakes is a serious public health concern and needs immediate attention."

In March, Rep. Pascrell welcomed EPA Administrator Jackson to Pompton Lakes in a meeting he arranged with state and local officials and residents. That was followed by a second meeting in May in Washington, D.C. in which the congressman brought local officials and residents to the table with Administrator Jackson and DuPont officials.

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