

DNREC announces Blades Groundwater Site has been proposed for Superfund NPL listing by US EPA

DOVER – As a significant step toward environmental remediation of hazardous substances found within the Town of Blades in Sussex County, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed the Blades Groundwater Site to the Superfund National Priorities List (NPL), Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control Secretary Shawn M. Garvin announced today. The NPL is EPA's list of priority sites where there have been releases of hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants requiring evaluation for possible remediation.

When the Blades Groundwater Site – which DNREC began treating with carbon filtration in 2018 to maintain safe use of the town's water supply – is listed to the NPL, it will be eligible for remedial action financed under the federal Superfund program. NPL eligibility will allow EPA to use Superfund authority and resources to help DNREC continue to investigate and remediate the contamination and protect human health and the environment in Blades. DNREC requested EPA's assistance with the management and remediation of the site due to the complex nature of the hazardous chemicals and the extent of the contamination. DNREC worked closely with the EPA and the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) in February 2018 identifying per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination, notifying local officials and the public, and securing safe drinking water supplies.

The proposed listing of the Blades Groundwater Site is due to the identification of electroplating compounds, PFAS, and hazardous metals contamination in municipal and residential

drinking water wells in and near the Town of Blades. PFAS includes the chemicals, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), and is also referred to as perfluorinated compounds (PFCs) and perfluoroalkyls.

The public drinking water currently provided by the Town of Blades is treated to remove contamination, including PFAS. DNREC also coordinated carbon treatment for the impacted private residential wells, following DPH's recommendation for appropriate carbon treatment. The finished drinking water meets federal and state safe drinking water standards. Recent testing completed in October 2019 indicates the Blades municipal drinking water continues to meet drinking water standards.

The EPA – with support from DNREC, DPH, and the Town of Blades – plan to hold a local public information meeting in December in the Blades area to provide information on the site and the proposed listing to the NPL. EPA, DPH and DNREC will work closely with state and local agencies and officials throughout the NPL listing process. Supporting documentation for the proposed listing of the Blades Groundwater Site is available at:

<http://www.epa.gov/superfund/current-npl-updates-new-proposed-npl-sites-and-new-npl-sites>.

If the comments received throughout the NPL listing process do not affect EPA's scoring of the site, the site could be eligible for listing on the NPL. If the site is listed on the NPL, EPA will again provide public notice in the Federal Register, and formally respond to the comments received.

Media contact: Michael Globetti, DNREC Public Affairs, 302-739-9902