

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 24, 2015

The Honorable Deborah L. James
Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear Secretary James:

We write to urge you to fully and promptly comply with the Administrative Order issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to the U.S. Air Force (USAF) dated July 8, 2015 regarding the contamination of water supply wells, including the Haven Well, located on and near the former Pease Air Force Base, in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. As you are aware, the presence of perfluorochemicals (PFCs) in the Haven Well is likely due to the Air Force's use of fire-fighting foam at Pease.

We remain concerned that your failure to move quickly and comply with this Order continues to pose a public health risk to the community. As you are aware, the State of New Hampshire detected PFCs in the Haven Well at levels 12.5 times higher than the EPA's Provisional Health Advisory on April 16, 2014. The Haven Well has since been shut down but several other wells in close proximity continue to supply drinking water to the Pease community. These two additional wells could be at risk of increased contamination because they are situated at a lower gradient than the Haven Well and the contaminants have a high likelihood of continuing to migrate down-gradient through the bedrock. As you know, studies have indicated that the continued exposure to low levels of PFCs in drinking water may cause adverse health effects.

We appreciate your willingness to work with the State and with the City to date on this matter but more must be done to protect the community from the harmful effects of PFCs in the drinking water. Therefore, we urge you to immediately and fully comply with the EPA's Order to treat the Haven Well and restore the aquifer at Pease.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
U.S. Senator



Kelly A. Ayotte
U.S. Senator