

Gordon Chase (Chairman),
Removal, Remediation and Monitoring work group
BoRit Community Advisory Group
Ambler PA 19002

Mary Aversa,
Borough Manager,
Ambler Borough Council
Ambler PA 19002
email: manager@borough.ambler.pa.us

January 22nd 2012

Dear Ms Aversa,

As you are aware, the BoRit CAG is charged with the responsibility of monitoring the proceedings at the Asbestos superfund site in Ambler and amongst other actions, disseminating information to the community at large. Ambler Borough is a valued and regular participant in this public body and we now require your input on a matter of concern regarding the public water supply.

As chair of the RR&M work group it is my responsibility to investigate those areas of the operation that fall within the RR&M remit. One such area is the monitoring of findings pertaining to the significant ground water contamination that has been found under the BoRit site by the EPA.

You will also be aware that the residents of Ambler Borough receive the majority of their drinking water supply from ground water wells owned and operated by Ambler Borough. Some of these wells are only a few hundred yards from the boundary of the BoRit and Ambler Piles super fund sites. You will appreciate water is not respectful or cognisant of man made boundary lines and the action of pumping water from underground sources greatly affects the natural flows towards the point of extraction. In particular, Ambler Borough wells #4 and #9 are within 400-500 yards of these superfund sites and the contaminated groundwater that lies beneath.

It has come to our attention that Ambler Borough has in the past, and again in 2011, applied for and received exemption from testing of certain contaminants from these and other wells. The RR&M committee, which includes both co-chairs of the full CAG, are most concerned to find that the exemptions for which Ambler Borough have applied, cover some of the exact same pollutants that have been found in the ground water so close to wells 4 and 9. Specifically this includes exemption for testing from asbestos and dioxins, whilst other contaminants including arsenic and a group of 20 volatile organic compounds (known collectively as VOC1) are only tested once every three years.

The recent advice received by the CAG from a local hydro-geologist has resulted in our concerns being formally passed to the EPA for investigation. We believe there is potential for risk of contamination of public water sources from the very contaminants that Ambler Borough feels are not worthy of more frequent testing or, testing at all for contaminants such as DI (2-ETHYLHEXYL) PHTHALATE which was found in BoRit groundwater at levels 9 times the maximum contamination limit and is now exempt from testing by Ambler Borough.

We would much appreciate receiving your advice as to the rationale behind these requested waivers so that we may better understand why contaminants found in the groundwater at such high levels by EPA, appear to be of less concern to Ambler Borough considering that public drinking water wells are so close to these known contaminated water sources.

Sincerely,
Gordon Chase: Chair RR&M work group
Bob Adams & David Froelich: BoRit CAG co Chairs
Sharon McCormick & Lynn Hoffman: BoRit CAG RR&M Workgroup members.

Sent by Email January 22nd 2012