

Roy Cooper, Governor



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### **State orders Chemours to control additional sources of GenX contamination**

#### ***DEQ also directs Chemours to use new technology to reduce air emissions, orders pilot study of well filters***

**RALEIGH** – The N.C. Department of Environmental Quality on Monday issued a [notice of violation](#) to Chemours Fayetteville Works ordering the company to immediately take new measures to control additional sources of GenX and other perfluorinated compounds from site contamination and air emissions. The state agency also [issued a letter](#) directing the company to begin a trial of new technology to curb emissions from the facility’s smokestacks and [granted limited approval](#) for Chemours to test carbon filtration systems on residential drinking water wells.

The Feb. 12 notice of violation cites Chemours’ failure to take action following a [Dec. 15 letter](#) from DEQ that directed the company to terminate or control sources of contamination and mitigate onsite hazards. The notice of violation requires Chemours to take immediate measures to mitigate any hazards resulting from exposure to GenX and other pollutants. The notice of violation also directs the company to immediately take steps including but not limited to:

- Excavate, treat or control all stormwater and wastewater conveyance ditches
- Remove, treat or control other known sources that could be causing further contamination
- Clean potentially contaminated equipment and capture any resulting wastewater for offsite disposal
- Reduce or eliminate air emissions that are contributing to groundwater contamination

The notice of violation comes in the wake of four spill incidents in recent weeks at the Bladen County facility. Clean-up efforts began immediately following each spill and no contaminated wastewater reached the Cape Fear River. State officials do not believe the spills caused subsequent GenX spikes in water samples taken from the facility’s discharge pipe at the river. However, there is a correlation between rain events and elevated levels of the chemical in water samples taken at that location.

In September, DEQ pursued civil action against Chemours and obtained a [partial consent order](#) requiring the company to stop all discharge of process wastewater containing GenX. As part of their response to the consent order, Chemours severed and capped the plant’s industrial wastewater pipe. On Nov. 13, DEQ issued a [notice of violation](#) to Chemours after a smokestack release of GenX caused deposition of the chemical on

the facility's grounds. Subsequent rainfall mixed with the GenX which resulted in contaminated stormwater being discharged to the Cape Fear River. Final enforcement action for this violation is under review by the department.

### **Chemours required to install new technology to reduce air emissions**

DEQ's Division of Air Quality has required Chemours to implement new technology to control and significantly reduce the amount of GenX from indoor sources that is released through smokestacks at two buildings on the Fayetteville Works site.

The new air abatement system will use a mechanism called carbon adsorption to capture contaminants from the air. While indoor air from the Vinyl Ethers North Tower and the Polymer Processing Agent facility is currently drawn directly up and out of smokestacks, the abatement system will first route that air through the added filter before returning it to the stack for release.

Engineering estimates suggest that this will drastically cut the overall rate of GenX in air emissions, reducing by more than 90 percent the amount of GenX contributed through stack emission of filtered indoor air. Waste material collected in the abatement system will be disposed of offsite.

Chemours is responsible for developing a test protocol for review and approval by the Division of Air Quality. The company will be required to conduct air sampling and analysis, with timely results provided to the DEQ.

### **Carbon well filtration system pilot study ordered**

DEQ's Division of Waste Management issued a conditional approval for a pilot study to test filtration systems at four residential drinking water wells to be determined by the department. In January, Chemours submitted to the state a [proposal for installing](#) granular activated carbon filtration systems at numerous residences located near the Fayetteville Works facility. After a full review of the proposal, state officials determined that there was insufficient data to determine whether such filtration systems are effective.

Today's conditional approval establishes a step-by-step plan for a pilot study of the filtration systems which will include strict state oversight. Upon completion of the study, Chemours must submit a final report to the Division of Waste Management for review and analysis. Officials will then determine whether use of the filtration systems is a viable short-term solution for wells that have been impacted by GenX contamination.

### **Well sampling continues**

Private well sampling continues in the areas surrounding the Chemours facility. Testing done to date indicates that 151 wells near the Chemours facility have levels of GenX above the health goal. Residents who rely on those wells are currently receiving bottled water.

[Phase III sampling results](#) are available online as well as a [map of the area](#) where Phase IV sampling recently began.

More information about the state's GenX investigation, sampling efforts and other related topics is available on the DEQ website at: <https://deq.nc.gov/news/hot-topics/genx-investigation>.

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