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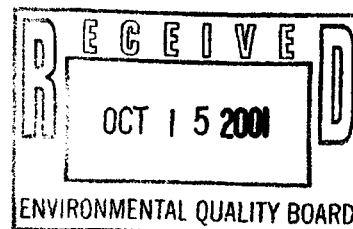
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

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October 9, 2001

*Environmental Quality Board
P O Box 8477
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8477*



Dear Friends,

With the publication of new Public Notification and consumer Confidence Report Rules, the Department of Environmental Protection has an opportunity to strengthen the public's right to know when our drinking water may affect our health. These regulations are critical to allow all contaminants in their water that could make them sick. For that reason, I am submitting the following comments on the proposed rules.

Public Notification Rule: *We are concerned that the proposed rule will weaken some of the existing protection afforded to the residents of Pennsylvania, in some cases actually delaying notification when our water is unsafe to drink.*

Notification of the media within 24 hours: *Under the proposed rule, it may sometimes be as long as 30 days before the public is notified that unhealthy levels of arsenic or some other cancer-causing chemical have been found in their tap water. This is unacceptable. Consumers should be informed of any violation of state drinking water standards as soon as possible so that they can take steps to protect their health. The quickest way to do this is to require that utilities notify local newspapers and the broadcast media of any Tier I or Tier II violation within 24 hours.*

Use multiple methods of notification to reach people: *While immediate notification of the media is important, using the media alone is not sufficient. Multiple methods of notification need to be utilized in order to reach all consumers of the water supply, particularly for the most serious violations (Tier I). In addition, using a posting as the only means of informing the public about a drinking water violation is not sufficient. Utilities should be required to use several of the available options for informing their consumers about potential threats to their health, especially for the most serious Tier I violations.*

should place a prominent notice in that language in the report sent to all consumers announcing the availability of the translated version. This is the only way to guarantee accurate information is provided to non-English speaking populations.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment, and look forward to a positive response from the Board and Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan A. Surra", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

*Dan A. Surra, Representative
75th Legislative District*

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