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EMBARGOED: GenX concentrations in treated water continue downward trend based on new data

Most recent test results all below health goal level

RALEIGH – As part of its ongoing investigation, state officials today released new data for GenX concentrations in water samples collected July 12 and 13 in the Cape Fear River.

Those test results show that concentrations of the unregulated chemical GenX in all treated water samples collected by the state during week four of sampling remained below the 140 parts per trillion [health goal](#) developed by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. The health goal represents the concentration of GenX at which no adverse non-cancer health effects would be anticipated over an entire lifetime of exposure to the most sensitive populations. State officials expect some fluctuation in results for measurements in the parts-per-trillion range.

Concentrations of GenX in the Cape Fear have dropped since the state’s investigation prompted Chemours, the chemical’s manufacturer, to stop discharging GenX into the river. The company is capturing the discharge and sending it out of state for incineration.

“It’s good news that recent test results are showing levels of GenX in treated water trending downward to below our health goal,” said Mandy Cohen, secretary of the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. “We will continue to monitor these results to look for any new, emerging trends, and will alert the public in timely fashion as we have new results to share.”

Michael Regan, secretary of the Department of Environmental Quality, added that his agency and staff at DHHS continue to investigate.

“The first four weeks of data gathered as part of our investigation are encouraging, and we’re continuing our investigation to protect the health and safety of those who depend on the Cape Fear River for drinking water and other uses,” Regan said.

During his July 24 visit to Wilmington to meet with local officials about GenX, [Gov. Roy Cooper announced next steps](#) that the state is taking to protect drinking water in North Carolina and to get answers for people living in the Lower Cape Fear region. Read the details of [Gov. Cooper’s plan](#).

DEQ will continue its water sampling regimen of treated water in the Cape Fear region for the foreseeable future. Water from all sampling is being sent to the Environmental Protection Agency’s lab in the Research Triangle Park.

Water samples collected on July 12 in the Fayetteville area and July 13 in the Wilmington area show all finished water sites have concentrations of GenX below the health goal of 140 parts per trillion. Samples in both regions collected during week three also reflected this downward trend, except for one anomaly at the Bladen Bluffs site. Test results for samples taken at this location came back below the health goal in the most recent round of testing.

Water sampling results can sometimes be influenced by rainfall, changes in river flows and variability in laboratory results. Moreover, variability in such low concentrations is going to be greater and it’s important to put such small

concentrations into perspective, said Sheila Holman, assistant secretary for the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality.

“It is very difficult to understand how minute a particle one part per trillion really is,” Holman said. “To better visualize it, one part per trillion would be represented by a single drop of food coloring in 18 million gallons of water.”

DEQ expects to receive and make publicly available another batch of water sampling results next week. DEQ is also working with the EPA lab to test for concentrations of other compounds related to GenX also noted in a research paper published by Detlef Knappe, the N.C. State University researcher who worked with the EPA to identify GenX in the Cape Fear River.

DEQ has created a map on its GenX web page to better illustrate the state’s sampling results. Results may be viewed at: <https://deq.nc.gov/news/hot-topics/genx-investigation/genx-sampling-sites>. For more information about the state’s investigation, you can check out the GenX web page at: <https://deq.nc.gov/news/hot-topics/genx-investigation>.

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