

EPA Orders Access To Construct Alternate Water Line For Hudson Dredging Project

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(New York, N.Y.) To ensure that contingencies are in place to protect drinking water supplies during Hudson River dredging, EPA today issued orders to the town of Halfmoon, New York and the Water Commissioners of the town of Waterford to gain access needed to construct a water line that will carry drinking water from Troy to Halfmoon and to the town of Waterford, New York. EPA will soon begin construction of the new water line, at an estimated cost of more than \$6 million, and at no cost to the residents of those towns. EPA is encouraged that the town of Waterford has granted EPA access to town properties. The Waterford Water Commissioners (who administer the town of Waterford's municipal water system) and the town of Halfmoon have not consented to provide EPA with access to properties needed by EPA to conduct the work. The failure of these entities to provide EPA with the requested access to the properties in a timely manner threatens to delay the start of construction of the water line, increasing the risk that it will not be completed before the scheduled start of Phase 1 dredging in the late spring of 2009.

"EPA is firmly committed to making sure that drinking water from the Hudson River meets federal health standards throughout the dredging," said EPA Regional Administrator Alan J. Steinberg. "We had no other choice but to use our authorities under federal law to issue access orders that compel the property owners to grant access to EPA and its contractors so that construction of the water line can begin this month."

When constructed, the new water line will provide the towns with an alternate water source that would be available in the unlikely event that dredging causes violations of the health-based drinking water standard in the river. EPA would pay the towns' increased costs of using the water piped in from Troy during times when PCB levels in the Upper Hudson River exceed the established criteria, or when there is insufficient time to get water monitoring results before water at the dredging locations reaches water supply intakes.

It is EPA's goal to complete the water line before the start of dredging. There will, however, be other measures in place to protect the water supplies even if the water line is not completed when dredging begins. For example, the project will stop if dredging-related PCBs at established monitoring locations in the Upper Hudson exceed the federal and state drinking water standard. In addition, for the first three years of dredging, through the first and well into the second phase, the dredging will occur more than 30 miles away from the Waterford and Halfmoon drinking water intakes. Over this distance, any PCBs that are stirred up will be diluted with river water from other tributaries, which will substantially reduce the concentrations of PCBs in river water that could potentially reach the Halfmoon and Waterford intakes.

For more information on the Hudson River PCBs site, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/hudson>.

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