

Summary: 170+ Letters on Chemical Contaminants

Note: Each of the signatories below submitted this letter on his or her own.

March 2014

Dear Chesapeake Bay Program:

Setting defined goals on reducing toxic contaminants in the Chesapeake Bay must be a part of the agreement between Chesapeake Bay states and the federal government if any real progress is to be made concerning Chesapeake Bay restoration. At this time when toxic chemicals are linked to intersex fish, hermaphroditism in amphibians, birds with thinning eggshells, adverse impacts on crabs, and a growing number of human health impacts like, cancer, autism and Parkinson's disease, the time to act is now.

The 2012 federal report Toxic Contaminants in the Chesapeake Bay and its Watershed found that current state programs and state-level total maximum daily load (TMDL) standards inadequately address the serious and pervasive contaminant data gaps. Seventy-two percent of the Bay's tidal-water segments are fully or partially impaired due to the presence of toxic contaminants. Toxic contaminants of concern include PCBs, PAHs, pesticides, mercury, pharmaceuticals and endocrine disruptors.

Because of these findings, the Chesapeake Bay Program cannot ignore its duty under the Clean Water Act and Executive Order 13508 to address these threats to the water quality and the ecosystems it aspires to improve and protect.

Now is the time to act on toxic contaminants. We urge the Chesapeake Bay Program to revise its Agreement and establish toxic contaminant reduction goals.

Sincerely,

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