



TOWN OF NEW CASTLE

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May 18, 2018

Commissioner Sherita Amler, MD
Westchester County Health Department
25 Moore Ave
Mt Kisco, NY 10549

Dear Commissioner Amler,

Thank you for your response to our letter regarding water quality issues at the Sunshine Children's Home (SCH). We appreciate your detailed, point-by-point responses to the questions we asked. Moreover, we value your strong commitment to ensuring the health and welfare of our residents. As local elected officials, we share these objectives and welcome the opportunity to work with your department to promote the availability of safe and clean drinking water.

In your response letter (dated April 23, 2018) you wrote: "WCHD has not received an application, a report or any specifications from SCHWS regarding any radium removal system at their water facility and therefore cannot provide any information on such a system." Our Board was concerned and disappointed to learn that forward progress has not yet been made on the water filtration system, and we believe this warrants follow-up action on WCHD's part.

In September 2016, our colleagues on the New Castle Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) issuing a Negative Declaration resolution that addressed the issue of radium as follows:

21. During the public hearing concerns were raised regarding Radium in Wells #3. The Town's consulting hydrogeologist confirmed that there was a Radium exceedance in Well #3 during the October to December 2015 sampling period. The Applicant addressed this water quality issue by temporarily suspending use of Well #3, which was taken out of service. In addition and per the requirements of the WCDOH, the Applicant will be addressing the Radium for water to be used within the buildings from Well #3 through a combination of blending the water from Well #3 with water from Wells #1 and #2 and a new water quality treatment system. The new water quality treatment system will include equipment to reduce the concentration of Radium to acceptable levels and must be approved by the WCDOH. Once installed, the water quality treatment system will be monitored by a NYS certified Class C water operator.

When SCH brought Well #3 back online in November 2017, they were constrained to blend water from Wells #1 and #2 with the water in Well #3 due to the radium levels in Well #3. We presume this was done as an interim measure. In our view, blending is not an acceptable long term solution given SCH's commitment and ability to implement a filtration system. Although WCHD approved the decision to bring Well #3 back online, we hope and encourage you to fulfill your mission to ensure the availability of safe and clean drinking water by working with SCH to immediately implement the filtration system. We understand that after re-opening Well #3 and blending water supplies, "sample test results have remained below the MCL in the water distributed to customers at SCH." However, we note that this does not mean that the water is radium-free, only that *to date* the level of radium in the drinking water has been under the maximum allowable amount. This is hardly reassuring considering the already vulnerable children consuming the water at SCH.

There is an obvious solution that would permanently address what are undeniably serious and legitimate public health concerns: install the proposed radium filtration system. Indeed, it is a solution that SCH itself has agreed to pursue. We ask WCHD to use its authority to expedite this next step. As public servants, we are duty bound to protect the health and safety of the medically-fragile children who reside at SCH, many of whom come from moderate and low-income families.

We appreciate your responsive leadership and are grateful for your assistance in this matter.

Very Truly Yours,

Town Board, Town of New Castle
Robert J. Greenstein, Town Supervisor
Lisa S. Katz, Deputy Town Supervisor
Jeremy Saland, Town Councilmember
Hala Makowska, Councilmember
Ivy A. Pool, Councilmember

cc: Sunshine Children's Home