**Attachment 6: Drinking Water Exposure Investigation**

**Dimock, PA Sample Results Letter**

**(ATSDR Letterhead)**

**Date**

Dear NAME:

In July 2017 you allowed the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to take samples of your private well water and bulk water (if appropriate) and test them for chemicals. We also sampled indoor air at your home for radon gas. We are providing you with the test results in this letter. We thank you for allowing us to test your well. If you have any questions, please call or e-mail Robert Helverson at 215-814-3139, or by email at [gfu6@cdc.gov](mailto:gfu6@cdc.gov)

Sincerely,

Robert Helverson, MS

Region 3 Representative

Division of Community Health Investigations (DCHI), Eastern Branch

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)

Enclosure (Will be chemical-specific writeups for each contaminant – see example below – up to date toxicological information and appropriate references will be included.)

**Methane can increase risk for explosion**

The methane level in your water (10 mg/L) was equal to the bottom end of the warning range set by

the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI). The possible buildup of methane gas indoors can

increase the risk for an explosion. Drinking methane dissolved in well water is not considered a

health concern.

**Sodium is a health concern for people trying to limit salt intake**

Sodium was found in your well at 24.2 mg/L, which exceeds the EPA DWEL advisory level of 20

mg/L. The level of 20 mg/L is intended to protect people who have high blood pressure or are on a

sodium-restricted diet. Drinking water with a high level of sodium is a health concern for people who

must limit how much salt they eat or drink. The taste of water is generally offensive to all users at

levels of 200 mg/L and above because of the salty taste. Children are also sensitive to salt in their diet.

People who drink this water and must limit their salt intake should discuss the levels of sodium in their

water with their family doctor.

**TDS may make water hard or salty**

Total dissolved solids (TDS) were found in your well at 522 mg/L, which is above the EPA SMCL of

500 mg/L. TDS is a measure of dissolved substances in the water. If the TDS is high, then the water

may be hard, stain, or taste salty. Based on taste, TDS levels greater than 1,100 mg/L are considered to

be unacceptable for drinking water. Because the level in your well is above 500 mg/L, your water

may taste salty.

**Arsenic can increase the risk of cancer**

Arsenic was found in your well water at 0.17 μg/L and does not exceed the EPA MCL of 10 μg/L or a

non-cancer ATSDR screening level of 3 μg/L. Arsenic can increase the risk of cancer of the skin and

lungs. The amount found in your well water exceeds the cancer screening value of 0.023 μg/L. If you

consume the water for many years (70 years) and drink at least 2 liters a day, at the level detected in

your water, there is a slight increased risk of developing cancer.

**Iron may affect taste and cause staining**

Iron was found in your well water at 758 μg/L, which is above the EPA SMCL of 300 μg/L Drinking

the water with this amount of iron will not harm the health of a normal person but some people have a

condition called hemochromatosis (body absorbs too much iron), and drinking water with too much

iron may cause organ damage. Your water may have a bad taste (metallic), and a rusty color which can

stain clothes and dishes after washing. Because the levels are above the SMCL, your water may not be

suitable for drinking or cooking.

**Lithium is a health concern if people are taking it for medical reasons**

Lithium was found in your well at 31.7 μg/L which is above the screening level of 31 μg/L for

children. Lithium is prescribed by doctors to treat mood disorders. Its use as a medicine should be

closely monitored by a doctor because a person can experience side effects such as an upset stomach

and effects on the kidneys and nervous system, if they take too much. A person taking lithium for

medical reasons should consult their physician if they using this water for drinking or cooking.

**TPH and Oil and Grease may affect taste and quality of water**

TPH were found in your well water at 940 μg/L which is above the screening level defined by

IDEM. Oil and Grease were found in your well water at a level of 2.6 mg/L (no screening level

available). TPH and Oil and Grease are not normally found in drinking water supplies. Their

presence may affect the taste and quality of your drinking water. Finding TPH in a water sample

means that a range of hydrocarbons is present in your well water; this measurement is not specific to

any one chemical. Unless we know what the chemicals were in this TPH mixture, we cannot tell

you what this detection means for your health.