



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
NATIONAL EXPOSURE RESEARCH LABORATORY  
RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC 27711

December 22, 2017



OFFICE OF  
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Jack Blalock  
Mayor, City of Portsmouth  
Municipal Complex  
1 Junkins Avenue  
Portsmouth, New Hampshire 03801

Dear Mayor Blalock:

I am sending this letter in response to your request for assistance dated November 29, 2017. As your request notes, my laboratory has been actively working with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) on research into the analysis of PFAS compounds in collaboration with our colleagues in Region 1 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The goal of this research is to produce an analytical method which NHDES could use to solicit commercial laboratories for future analyses. I noted in your request that the City of Portsmouth is also actively working with NHDES, as well as with the United States Air Force, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), and with EPA Region 1.

I think it is important that we continue to work through and build upon these existing relationships as we collectively strive to understand and address the complex issues surrounding PFAS in the environment and the potential for human exposure. We hope to complete our research work into analytical methods for water media as requested by NHDES in the near future. Accordingly, with respect to your specific request for the City of Portsmouth to be included in the research studies that we are supporting with NHDES, I would suggest that you work through NHDES and EPA Region 1 to provide input into the scope of potential future PFAS research studies and analyses in EPA Region 1 for which my laboratory, or a commercial laboratory, may be called upon to provide analytical support.

I will also mention that scientists in my laboratory reviewed the research paper referenced in your request and have indicated that, while we could eventually replicate the types of analyses associated with PFAS compounds in aqueous film-forming foams (AFFFs) referenced in the manuscript, it would require some adjustments and additional preparations within our laboratory, so we are currently not in a position to provide this type of analytical support.

I would be glad to address any questions or concerns that you may have, but, as stated above, I would like to suggest that you coordinate future requests through EPA Region 1. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Timothy H. Watkins  
Director