
Emerging Compounds

\$6,055,552 R / \$336,441 NR / 37 FTE

Budget request equips DEQ with the tools and resources to protect water quality.

- More emerging compounds are being discovered. DEQ has to be able to respond quickly and appropriately to protect human health and safety.
- New staff would be dedicated to emerging compounds specifically, focusing their efforts on emerging compounds rather than being redirected from normal duties.
- Staff would be located at both DEQ headquarters and across the state at regional offices.
- 37 FTEs include 15 environmental scientists, 10 engineers, 4 hydro-geologists, 3 business analysts, 2 administrative staff, 1 chemist, 1 economist, and 1 statistician.
- NR funds would be used acquire a mobile lab to help respond to hurricanes and algal blooms in impacted areas to help bring drinking water systems back online faster.

Emerging Compounds: Chemicals that fall into one of three categories: (1) Brand new chemicals with mostly unknown health effects, (2) existing chemicals for which health information is limited, or (3) existing chemicals for which detection methods were not previously available.

PFAS: Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances, a group of man-made chemicals used in products including cookware and food packaging. These are the emerging compounds of great concern.

GenX: Trade name of a specific PFAS that was released into the Cape Fear River near Fayetteville. It is manufactured by Chemours and is also a by-product of some of their other operations.

February 25th, 2019 – Consent Order is signed, requires Chemours to:

- Pay a fine of \$12 million - largest civil penalty in DEQ history.
- Stop the discharge of any process wastewater, reduce GenX air emissions by 99%, and reduce the amount of PFAS entering the Cape Fear River by at least 75%.
- Provide permanent drinking water supplies for wells testing above 140 parts per trillion.
- Develop an accelerated plan to reduce PFAS contamination in downstream public utilities.

DEQ has been utilizing existing staff and resources to address emerging compounds since 2017, with some appropriated funds during the 2018 Short Session.

- Confirmed the link between air emissions and groundwater contamination of GenX.
- Conducted extensive sampling at the Chemours site, downstream drinking water facilities, private wells, schools, and more.
- Reduced NPDES permitting backlog from 40% to 33%.
- Hosted several informational sessions to keep the community informed.
- Established a PFAS rainwater monitoring network.
- Used \$1,010,575 R and \$1,862,000 NR to hire 15 FTEs, purchase a mass spectrometer, and increase sampling and analysis.