

PFOA TESTIMONIAL

January 31, 2017

My wife and I first learned about the PFOA contamination while vacationing in Florida last winter. We left our rental early to deal with the mounting issues at home. Arriving to our house with the realization that the water for drinking, cooking and bathing was contaminated was depressing. We, as with our neighbors and other community members, began picking up bottled water for cooking and drinking but were advised to take short showers and not inhale any while showering. Luckily a system was soon in place for water delivery. The culprit for this contamination was the St.Gobain company that had purchased the ChemFab factory a stones throw distance from our home. Several months later St.Gobain agreed to install POET systems in affected homes. These systems were designed to remove the PFOA contamination.

It has always been the desire of the community to be connected to a municipal water supply. Other related concerns.

1. The POET systems, although they may work, are expensive to maintain and monitor.

Will St.Gobain pay for this forever? Also, by agreeing to install the systems, they have de facto admitted to being the cause of the problem.

2. Blood tests have revealed high levels of the chemical in local residents. St.Gobain has questioned the science although there are large scale studies to the contrary. We demand ongoing medical monitoring.

3. The property values of our homes are now in question. Will prospective buyers now believe that the POET systems will alleviate the problem? Contaminated water will continue to enter the house. Also, will prospective buyers have to be advised that the water pressure to appliances and fixtures has been greatly compromised.

4. Ironically, a geological study of our well has determined that our water is totally pure and contaminate free, except for the PFOA. Something out of our control. We will continue fight for these issues until we are totally satisfied.

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Hello, My name is Doctor Bo Bergman and I work at West Mountain Animal Hospital, a local veterinary hospital. I am here this evening to provide a veterinary perspective on how the PFOA situation impacts our community. I have two points to share - the first is related to the medical side of things. The second is related to the impact on my clients and community of animals.

We are all well aware of the reported impact of PFOAs on human health. Experts suggest PFOA exposure may be related to cancer and organ injury - however it is difficult to perform double blind experiments and tests on humans, for obvious reasons, to observe direct cause and effect. Unfortunately for animals, this is not the case - there are long lists of experiments and many papers that show evidence that lab animals exposed to PFOA increases the risk of certain tumors of the liver, testicles, mammary glands, and pancreas. There is evidence that there are toxic effects on the immune system, the liver, the endocrine system, and on neonatal health. This evidence has been seen in rodents, birds (such as chicken and quail), fish, beef and dairy cows, arctic seals, and other species. There have been a number of cases of pet bird deaths related to the inhalation of fumes from overheating of cookware made with PFOA. For better or worse, animals have been used as the "canary in the coalmine" regarding the health effects of PFOAs.

My second part of this is related to being a veterinarian in a small town. I was frequently questioned during the time when PFOAs were just being discovered in our water system - Will my cat get sick from drinking the tap water? Is my dog's liver cancer because I have high levels of PFOA's in my well? Did my cat get diabetes from PFOAs? I am unaware of a commercial PFOA blood testing facility for dogs and cats, and even if there was I'm not sure if I could answer yes or no to these questions. I am not a PFOA expert and I don't have a list of cases that may or may not have been related to PFOA. But as a general practitioner, I can talk about the stress and strain the PFOA toxins have caused my clients and their families. I can tell you that I talked about PFOAs daily with clients. I have clients who are already so cautious about what vaccines, or what monthly preventatives are given to their pet, or what food they feed - and then to have it come to light that the water they've been providing them for years has a toxin in it is heartbreaking. Many of the animals I see are members of the family and the toll it took on my clients can't be calculated.

The impact the PFOA situation has had on our community is beyond human health - it reaches to animal health and the human-animal bond.

I hope this brief summary helps provide perspective - I'm happy to answer any questions.