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August 8, 2022

The Honorable Debra Shore  
Regional Administrator  
U.S. EPA Region 5  
77 W. Jackson Blvd.  
Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Administrator Shore:

This letter is being sent following the harmful release and spread of hexavalent chromium into the Huron River over the past week by Tribar Technologies Inc. in Wixom, Michigan. This chemical release is inexcusable and deeply disturbing. Authorities at both the state and local levels are working around the clock to ensure the safety of the public and the impacted environment, but it is clear greater federal assistance and resources are needed from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

As you may know, according to reports, on Monday, August 1, 2022, Tribar Technologies Inc., an automotive plating company, notified the State of Michigan it had released approximately 10,000 gallons of a hexavalent chromium plating solution into the Wixom wastewater treatment plant, which an unknown amount has since passed through the plant and into the Huron River system. Hexavalent chromium compounds are known carcinogens, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and this reckless chemical release is now endangering communities, our natural resources, and animal habits.

With an unknown amount of possibly toxic chemicals potentially drifting downstream towards Ann Arbor's drinking water intake, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) and Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) have recommended to the public to avoid contact with sections of the Huron River water—this means no drinking, no swimming, no playing, and no eating fish. Additionally, EGLE and MDHHS is aggressively testing the water downstream of the Wixom wastewater treatment plant.

There is growing alarm and uncertainty from downstream residents and across southeast Michigan in the aftermath of this disturbing release by Tribar Technologies Inc. Therefore, it is critical, moving forward, for EPA to be directly involved in this emergency response and to ensure all responsible parties are held accountable. To this end, we urge EPA to assign an On-Scene Coordinator, a Community Involvement Coordinator, and an Emergency Response Team,

that includes a Laboratory and Analytic Support Unit, for this situation. This is a request from the City of Ann Arbor and one I support.

Additionally, after extensive briefings and conversations with EGLE and MDHHS on this situation, the State of Michigan would benefit from additional technical assistance from EPA as they review the totality of the robust sampling data they have collected, and are in the process of still collecting, on the extent of the chemical release. The state, and the public, would benefit greatly from the resources and expert analysis and feedback EPA could provide. EPA has an important role here and we urge and support EPA to get more directly involved to provide its resources and expertise immediately.

In the interim, please provide answers to the following important questions below:

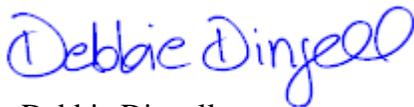
1. To date, what has been EPA's involvement since the public learned of the toxic chemical release from Tribar Technologies Inc. into the Huron River water system? What is EPA's role in the emergency, and what resources can EPA provide?
2. Has EPA issued Tribar Technologies Inc. with a Clean Water Act order or any other federal order? If not, is EPA considering the issuance of any such an order following this chemical release?
3. What emergency notifications were made by Tribar Technologies Inc., and when were they made? Did Tribar Technologies Inc. notify the EPA or the National Response Center (NRC)? If yes, please provide a copy of the NRC notification and any other notification records.
4. Has EPA established an incident management team to help respond to this toxic emergency? If so, who is the incident commander, and who is the lead agency?
5. Has EPA been involved in the sampling and analysis plan (SAP) developed by EGLE and MDHHS following this chemical release into the Huron River water system? Has EPA provided technical review and assistance on the SAP? If so, please provide a copy.
6. Is EPA reviewing the water sample results being collected by EGLE and MDHHS? Does EPA believe there is any threat to any public drinking water systems?
7. Has EPA assisted in EGLE's modeling or tracking of the chemical release? Does EPA agree with the projections?
8. What emergency actions have Tribar Technologies Inc. taken in the aftermath of this harmful chemical release, and are they cooperating in the emergency response?
9. Does EPA know the exact number of gallons of the hexavalent chromium solution that was released by Tribar Technologies Inc. and an accounting of all the possible chemicals included in this toxic release? If so, please provide as much detail as possible.

10. Is the type of hexavalent chromium released into the Huron River water soluble? If so, what type of treatment would be most effective?
11. What are the impacts of the release on the Wixom wastewater treatment plant? Additionally, does EPA expect any increase in PFAS contamination in the Huron River as a result of this chemical release incident?
12. Moving forward, how will EPA ensure there are no further toxic chemical releases by Tribar Technologies Inc.?
13. Tribar Technologies Inc. has a long history of chemical releases into the environment, most notably its contributions to the extensive PFAS contamination in the Huron River currently. How does EPA plan to hold this company accountable for these reckless and continuing toxic releases into the environment and surrounding communities?
14. What is the long-term remedy for restoring the Huron River following this toxic release and the PFAS releases caused by Tribar Technologies Inc.?

Thank you for your attention in this important public health and environmental matter developing along the Huron River. On behalf of my concerned constituents, and our local and state officials, we urge EPA to provide all the federal resources and expertise available to assist in this emergency response. All stakeholders, and every level of government, must work together now to effectively identify, contain, and remediate this contamination release, as well as properly hold Tribar Technologies Inc. accountable for this harmful chemical release.

Please know I stand ready to work with you and all parties to protect public health and our environment.

Sincerely,



Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress