



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUN 30 2021

THE ADMINISTRATOR

Dear Chemical Sector Partners:

Ensuring that drinking water and wastewater services are fully operational is critical to protecting our nation's public health and environment, as well as maintaining a functioning economy. I would like to request that chemical manufacturers and suppliers prioritize drinking water and wastewater systems as customers of critical water-treatment chemicals, such as gaseous chlorine, sodium hypochlorite and calcium hypochlorite.

This request is a result of concerning challenges that some water systems have recently experienced in procuring gaseous chlorine, sodium hypochlorite and calcium hypochlorite. Several water utilities across multiple states – California, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, New York, Oregon and Washington – have received *force majeure* notifications, even reducing chlorine allocations in some cases, from suppliers due to supply shortages across the industry. While drinking water and wastewater disinfection accounts for less than 5 percent of all chlorine consumed in the United States, this usage is vital to ensuring the health and well-being of our citizens and businesses.

If drinking water systems cannot obtain a sufficient and reliable supply of gaseous chlorine, sodium hypochlorite and calcium hypochlorite, they will be unable continue to provide safe drinking water to their communities. Similarly, if wastewater systems lack adequate chlorine supplies, they will be unable to disinfect treated wastewater prior to discharge to surface waters, potentially leading to an increase in the concentration of pathogens in the surface water. A loss of drinking water or wastewater services, even for short durations, would have cascading impacts on hospitals, manufacturing, government facilities, private offices and restaurants – essentially all of the critical services necessary to sustain a community.

By prioritizing delivery of chlorine and other critical water treatment chemicals to drinking water and wastewater systems and the retail vendors that sell chlorine to these systems, you can help to ensure the uninterrupted supply of safe drinking water and treatment of wastewater across the nation.

I also request that we maintain open lines of communication between the water and chemical sectors so that we can collectively maintain situational awareness of threats to the water treatment chemical supply chain. This awareness is particularly important as we enter what is forecast to be an active hurricane season with the potential to impact chemical manufacturers in states along the Gulf and Atlantic coasts.

The chemical sector is a key partner in the treatment of water and, therefore, in the protection of public health and the environment. My U.S. Environmental Protection Agency colleagues and I are committed to working with you to support our nation's public health and economic viability.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, or your staff may contact Jennifer McLain, director of the Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, at mclain.jennifer@epa.gov or (202) 564-4029.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael S. Regan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "M".

Michael S. Regan