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Hexavalent Chromium and Vanadium: North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality Report Addressing Standards/Health Screening Levels

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The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality ("DEQ") issued a legislatively mandated report titled *Final Report on the Study of Standards and Health Screening Levels for Hexavalent Chromium and Vanadium* ("Report").

2015 North Carolina legislation required that the North Carolina agency, in conjunction with the Department of Health and Human Services ("DHHS") study:

... the state groundwater quality standards and interim maximum allowable concentration levels in state rule 15A NCAC 02L, as well as the DHHS health screening levels for hexavalent chromium and vanadium.

The *Report* compares North Carolina's criteria and other southeastern states' standards and the federal maximum contaminant levels under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

The goal of the study is stated to be to assist in identifying "appropriate standards to protect public health, safety and welfare; the environment; and natural resources."

The *Report* discusses:

- Groundwater quality standards established by the North Carolina Environmental Management Commission
- Interim maximum allowable concentrations established by North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality
- Background standards established by DEQ
- Health screening levels established by DHHS
- Maximum contaminant levels established by the Safe Drinking Water Act
- Current North Carolina standards and screening levels for total chromium, hexavalent chromium, and vanadium
- Survey of other states' criteria
- Naturally occurring concentrations

The recommendations in the *Report* include:

1. DHHS should include an improved risk communication plan in its Health Risk Evaluations (HREs). DHHS recommendations for public and private water well use should be uniformly based upon the federal MCLs established by the Safe Drinking Water Act.
2. DWR should plan to adopt any new or revised public drinking water regulations when promulgated by EPA as a result of the UCMR3 monitoring data.
3. DWR should proceed to evaluate and revise the vanadium IMAC on the basis of current published and peer-reviewed toxicity information.
4. DWR will continue to stay in contact with key representatives at the IRIS Program (national Center for Environmental Assessment, US EPA Office of Research and Development) and await the US EPA Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) evaluation of the toxicity of *hexavalent chromium (Cr VI)*.
5. DWR should continue with groundwater monitoring needed to establish scientifically defensible concentrations believed to be representative of naturally occurring or background conditions.

[Click here to download a copy of the Report.](#)