

The Honorable Eric Holcomb, Governor
State of Indiana
200 W Washington Street, Room 206
Indianapolis, IN 46204
govholcomb@gov.in.gov
317-232-4567

Bruno Pigott, Commissioner
Indiana Department of Environmental Management
100 N Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46204
bpigott@idem.IN.gov

Dear Governor Holcomb and Commissioner Pigott:

I am writing to express my alarm and deep disappointment that the citizens of Indiana are forced, yet again, to cope with another major industrial discharge emergency that pollutes our waters and adversely impacts our natural resources, including our only national park. Based on the ongoing and chronic nature of industrial water pollution events along the shores of Lake Michigan, and in this case immediately following renewal of a wastewater discharge permit by the state and recent approval of a consent decree by a federal court, it is clear that Indiana's system of water pollution control regulation is broken.

I demand that Indiana's state leadership immediately undertake the following:

- Heighten scrutiny and vigorous enforcement against chronic polluters, **including much higher fines;**
- **Strengthen pollution control and communications** requirements in future National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit renewals;
- Strengthen support for the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), including **significantly higher funding**, to enable and empower the department to carry out its statutory duties to control and reduce industrial pollution entering our waterways; and,
- **A wide-ranging review** of the ineffectiveness of IDEM's NPDES permitting process.

Once again, residents of the region find themselves reeling from a situation where there are more questions than answers. Members of the public also find themselves shouldering the burden of sounding the alarm that our waters are being fouled – it is often my neighbors that are first noticing and reporting illegal discharges. We suffer the impacts. We demand change.

Two short years ago, we celebrated the creation of Indiana Dunes National Park, which attracts millions of visitors to Indiana to enjoy our lands and waters. A few short weeks ago the Governor celebrated the new pavilion at the Indiana Dunes State Park. This week, we found that our park beaches were closed again due to U.S. Steel's failure to prevent its waste from reaching

park waters and the failure of our regulatory system to impose permits and penalties will finally make them clean up their act.

Industry is undoubtedly important to the economy, providing jobs and other benefits to Indiana communities, but that cannot translate into a never-ending free pass to pollute! As stated in Indiana's Pollution Prevention Week declaration: "Indiana industry and IDEM can work together to ensure that thoughtful environmental action can strengthen both the economy and the environment." Now is the time to take the necessary steps to turn this idea into action and nowhere is more important than in the waters of our national park and Lake Michigan.

The state, with leadership from the Governor's Office and IDEM, must work immediately to address the systematic failure of U.S. Steel and other major polluters in Northwest Indiana to fulfill their obligations to operate their facilities without polluting the precious waters of Lake Michigan and its tributaries, impairing our precious natural resources including the Indiana Dunes National Park, and putting public health at risk. I urge you to act now to effectively enforce the Clean Water Act to ensure that the people and resources of Indiana and the Great Lakes are protected now and into the future.

Sincerely,