



State Secures \$110 Million Settlement with DuPont for Environmental Restoration Along Ohio River

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(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost announced a proposed \$110 million settlement with DuPont over chemical contamination spanning seven decades from the company’s Washington Works facility in Parkersburg, W.Va., just across the border from Washington County, Ohio.

“This settlement is a victory for all Ohioans, especially those living along the Ohio River near the Parkersburg plant,” said Governor DeWine, who originated the lawsuit against DuPont while serving as Ohio’s attorney general in 2018. “DuPont ignored the fact that the chemicals they were releasing were toxic, and this settlement ensures that they are held responsible for the pollution they knowingly caused to the environment. I applaud Attorney General Yost for aggressively pursuing this case and for bringing it to a successful conclusion.”

For his part, Attorney General Yost said the success of the settlement should be measured not only by the dollar amount involved but, perhaps more importantly, by the long-term oversight the state will maintain over the situation.

“This settlement has been a long time coming,” Yost said. “We are pleased to have the flexibility through this agreement to preserve our right to advocate for the health of Ohioans and our state’s environment.”

From the 1950s through 2013, DuPont manufactured Teflon products using the manmade chemical perfluorooctanoic acid, commonly known as PFOA or C8. PFOA, one of a group of synthetic per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) chemicals used in the production of numerous consumer and industrial products, has been

linked to serious health issues including kidney and testicular cancer, thyroid disease, low birth weight, and high cholesterol. Known to also be toxic and carcinogenic in animals, PFOA is remarkably persistent in water and soil, resisting typical environmental degradation processes.

Ohio was the first state to legally challenge DuPont for its use of PFOA. In operating the Washington Works plant, the suit alleged DuPont released PFOA-containing emissions into the air and PFOA-containing discharges into the Ohio River despite knowing of the chemical's risks to human health and the environment.

The settlement, which is currently pending the court's entry, comes six years after DuPont and Chemours, the company that split off from DuPont in 2015, agreed to pay \$670 million to settle thousands of personal injury lawsuits citing health problems related to the company's use of PFOA.

Today's settlement establishes an environmental restoration fund, with the \$110 million to be allocated as follows:

- 80% to address pollution from the Washington Works plant
- 16% to address damages from firefighting foam
- 4% to mitigate damages to natural resources

The agreement also advances additional obligations and assurances allowing Ohio to continue to protect its people and drinking water. The state preserves the authority to set, regulate, and enforce more stringent drinking water standards in the future, whether dictated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, for any PFAS or other hazardous substance.

Such flexibility is crucial, Yost said, given that regulatory standards are ever-evolving.

The history and fallout of DuPont's use of PFOA was dramatized in *Dark Waters*, a 2019 film starring Mark Ruffalo.