



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

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10 March 1996

Response to the Revised Superfund Proposed Plan
Tutu Wellfield Site, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands

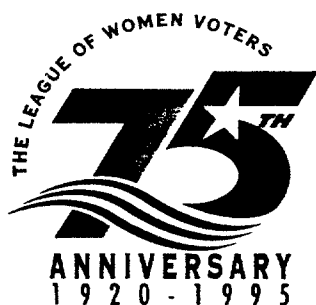
The League of Women Voters of the Virgin Islands (League, LWVVI) is pleased to respond favorably to the Revised Superfund Plan for the Tutu Wellfield Site, St. Thomas, U. S. Virgin Islands. The League's Committee on Planning and Environmental Quality (PEQ) has examined all of the alternatives carefully and agree that a combination of Soil Remediation Alternatives 3 and 4, and the Groundwater Remediation Alternative 4 provide the greatest potential for protection of human health and the environment of the site.

LWVVI has two remaining concerns related to public health and aquifer testing. Regarding the testing schedule, semi-annual sampling of approximately 15 wells at or near the plume for VOCs and BNAs is recommended. This is to continue through the remedial period of 30 years. Our question is whether, if and when any of these wells are considered sufficiently safe for human consumption, the testing will be increased to a monthly (or at least bi-monthly) schedule? The rationale for this request is based on the fact that DNAPLs or contaminants from other sources could apparently enter the water at any time, and the water be totally consumed by unsuspecting buyers over the next few months before discovery.

At the March 5th hearing, one of the representatives of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) stated that the population affected by the Tutu well pollution is too small to merit an epidemiological study. This was disturbing to many in the audience. ATSDR will conduct an education program for local health care professionals to assure that they know what to look for and how to respond to the signs of disease. We believe that an intense program of this sort will certainly be very helpful, but that the dissemination of information to non-professionals is equally important - in other words, additional efforts must be made to reach the less well-educated and less environmentally aware of the community. The League would be pleased to help with publicity and with follow-up activities through the local media: news articles, radio or television programs. Please let us know how we can help.

Sincerely,

Helen W. Gjessing
Helen W. Gjessing, PEQ Chair



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