



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

Region 1

5 Post Office Square, Suite 100  
Boston, Massachusetts 02109-3912

**BY ELECTRONIC MAIL**

August 5, 2020

The Honorable Edward J. Markey  
United States Senate  
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
Attn: [Georgia\\_Lagoudas@markey.senate.gov](mailto:Georgia_Lagoudas@markey.senate.gov)

The Honorable Ayanna Pressley  
United States House of Representatives  
1108 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
Attn: [Eric.White@mail.house.gov](mailto:Eric.White@mail.house.gov)

Dear Senator Markey and Representative Pressley:

Thank you for contacting the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding air quality concerns in Chelsea, Massachusetts. I have been asked to respond to your letter dated July 15, 2020, addressed to Administrator Andrew Wheeler.

In your letter you request that EPA deploy air monitoring equipment to better understand and address air quality concerns in Chelsea. You correctly state that there are no federal or state ambient air quality monitors located in Chelsea at this time. However, there are monitors located near Chelsea, three in Boston that are less than five miles away and another located in Lynn, approximately six miles away. States operate air monitoring programs working closely with EPA. When EPA works with states to design ambient air monitoring networks, there are a variety of factors taken into consideration including whether the ambient air quality measured by a given monitor is expected to be representative of the larger region.

In response to your concerns, EPA and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP) will work together to monitor and address potential particulate matter emissions associated with recent demolition activities as well as concerns about overall air quality in Chelsea. MADEP plans to more thoroughly study air quality in additional Massachusetts communities, including Chelsea, beginning this fall, and EPA will partner closely with MADEP on these issues.

My staff has informed MADEP of the immediate availability of nine sensors that are available to be loaned from EPA Region 1. These sensors could be very useful to understand particulate matter impacts until MADEP is able to place their own sensors in Chelsea. EPA and MADEP will collaborate to establish the most appropriate locations to collect the most representative data for Chelsea's residents. If air quality concerns are identified, EPA will work with Massachusetts to deploy a permanent air quality monitoring station in Chelsea.

Regarding construction dust, EPA and MADEP will follow up with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to ensure air monitoring is conducted at the demolition and construction sites referenced in your letter. This practice will allow demolition and construction sites to monitor dust or particulate matter levels and perform suppression activities if levels are elevated. When done properly, dust particles can be suppressed and not enter the air, minimizing potential exposure to residents of Chelsea.

EPA is committed to ensuring that the residents of Chelsea benefit from a safe environment and clean air to breathe. We look forward to working with MADEP to help address the concerns raised in your letter. If you have any questions, please contact me, or your staff may contact Paul Wintrob from my staff at [Wintrob.Paul@epa.gov](mailto:Wintrob.Paul@epa.gov) or at 617-918-1514.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis Deziel".

Dennis Deziel  
Regional Administrator

cc: Marty Suuberg, MADEP  
Glenn Keith, MADEP