

The original documents are located in Box 117, folder “Cancer” of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Ron Nessen donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

CANCER AGENTS IN DRINKING WATER

Question:

What is the Administration doing about the reports that there are cancer causing agents in the New Orleans drinking water?

Answer:

The United States Environmental Protection Agency is undertaking, beginning immediately, a nationwide study to determine the concentration and potential effect of certain organic chemicals in drinking water. This is in direct response to the situation in New Orleans.

Although this does not appear to be a new problem, inasmuch as the chemical agents have apparently been in the water for a considerable period of time, until recently chemical methods of analysis have not been sufficiently sensitive to detect them. Recent improvements in these techniques brought the light to the current situation.

Working with EPA will be experts from the National Cancer Institute and HEW. Some have indicated that chlorine may be a cause of these cancer-producing agents, however, EPA Administrator Train has stated that, based on current knowledge, the benefits of chlorination far outweigh the potential harmful effects of compounds that may be created by the process.



M. Duval
11/8/74