



September 1, 2023

The Honorable Michael S. Regan  
Administrator  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Regan:

We write to urgently request your attention to a dire situation faced by residents in Prichard, Alabama, who suffer from a malfunctioning water utility system. Immediate action is needed to improve water services that are impaired by frequent sewer system overflows, water leaks, unsafe water storage, and low water pressure.

For years, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) has been aware of faulty operations by the City of Prichard Water Works and Sewer Board. However, ADEM has not found a way to ensure best practices at the utility that deliver an effective and reliable water system for the health and safety of residents. Notwithstanding the considerable financial resources ADEM receives from the EPA, [ADEM's report](#) shows that in the year 2022 the Prichard residents have not benefitted from these federal funds for water system improvements.

We respectfully call on you to take corrective action that addresses the environmental injustice faced by Prichard residents, more than 90 percent of whom are Black and face the chronic hazards of:

- [inadequate water pressure](#) that has made it impossible for the local fire department to extinguish a house fire,
- toxic exposure to soil contaminated from [frequent sewer system overflows](#), and
- [unsafe drinking water](#) supplied from mildewed storage tanks.

The woeful inequity in Prichard is that water utility failures have gone without remedy for so long that each day holds the potential for disaster to families.

We Matter Eight Mile Community Association is a volunteer organization fighting to improve their public water system in Prichard, Alabama. Founded in 2011, We Matter is an environmental justice organization that forced the remediation of mercaptan in groundwater caused by a neglected pipeline leak in the Eight Mile and Prichard communities. We Matter stands in the gap to demand our community receives affordable, clean, and safe drinking water. We Matter seeks to forge a meaningful relationship with all those who will support us in this effort.

As you know, the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice is committed to assisting community-based organizations, through education, research, and engagement, to advance

equitable solutions that improve health, environmental, and climate conditions. DSCEJ stands in solidarity with We Matter Eight Mile Community Association.

Your leadership is needed now to protect lives in Prichard, Alabama. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

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