

WHQR News – Vince Winkel – Quarterly Report: (April 2nd through June 29th)

June 28 – 44 Species of Mosquitos in New Hanover County

Summer means more mosquitos in the Cape Fear region. Especially when it rains. The water creates ideal breeding conditions. New Hanover County's Mosquito Control Department is keeping busy.

June 27 – The 852 Page Toxicological Profile

There is more news to report on the GenX front. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry has released a draft study on the class of chemicals called PFOA and PFAS. It says the Environmental Protection Agency's recommended levels for these compounds in the water is too high.

June 22 – NC Supreme Court Chief Justice in Wilmington

More legal support for the state's poor. That was a point made by North Carolina Supreme Court Chief Justice Mark Martin in Wilmington on Friday. He was addressing the North Carolina Bar Association's annual meeting.

June 21 – Hot Weather and Health Concerns

It's been a hot few days. Heat indices in the Cape Fear Region have been over a hundred degrees most of the week. Summer doesn't officially begin until Thursday. People still tend to underestimate the effects heat can have on a person.

June 20 – City Council Approves Short Term Rental Plan

The City of Wilmington now has a short-term rental policy. After battling last night over specific conditions, the council passed the ordinance 4-2 with Councilman Kevin O'Grady walking out before the vote.

June 18 – City Council Takes on Rentals

Tuesday night the Wilmington City Council will hold a public hearing on short-term rental regulations. For more than two years, city staff and stakeholders have debated and studied the issue.

June 14 – Economic development in the Cape Fear Region

This week the North Carolina Economic Development Association held its annual conference in Wrightsville Beach. It brought those in the state and international economic development community together for a series of workshops. Here in the Cape Fear region, economic development is a high priority -- especially with the 421 Corridor now ripe for new development. The various groups involved here are not always on the same page.

June 12 – Chemours hosts for town hall meeting

Chemours, the company responsible for the unregulated, possibly dangerous, chemical compounds in this region's water supply, held a town hall meeting for the first time. Tuesday night in St. Pauls, near the company's Fayetteville facility, concerned citizens gathered to hear about plans for how the chemical giant plans to clean up its operation.

June 8 – GenX and the quest for health information

We are now into year two of the public's awareness of GenX and other compounds in the Cape Fear region's water supply. Health studies are currently underway to study the impact these chemicals might have on humans. Meanwhile experts are piecing together other available data to better understand the threats.

June 5 – New Hanover County approves new budget

New Hanover County has a new budget ready for the fiscal year beginning July 1st. In a surprise vote Monday, county commissioners unanimously approved the budget which includes a property tax decrease and increased funding for education.

June 1 – Hurricane season in the Cape Fear Region

We are now officially in the Atlantic Hurricane Season. It started June 1st. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration forecasts that a near-average season is likely, with 14 named storms, of which six could become hurricanes. A tropical storm becomes a hurricane when its wind speed reaches 74 mph. Even if a hurricane season is predicted to be mild, local officials here always prepare for the worst.

May 31 – Chemours opens its door to reporter

Chemours, the company that had been discharging GenX and other compounds into the Cape Fear River, is starting to speak. This week, WHQR's Vince Winkel visited the Chemours facility and sat down with the Fayetteville Works Site plant manager – where he learned about Chemours' new plan to open up to the community.

May 29 – Chemours announces new technology

On Tuesday, Chemours announced that carbon adsorption bed technology has been installed at two locations on its Fayetteville Works plant on the Cape Fear River. This is supposed to reduce the emissions of GenX into the air immediately.

May 21 – Dueling bills head to committee

Two bills aimed at GenX and emerging contaminants passed their first readings in Raleigh today. Democrats and Republicans from the Cape Fear region sponsored two different versions – both filed last Thursday.

May 16 – And a child shall lead them ...

More than 350 people packed a school auditorium this week in Columbus County, to learn more about a permit application. Malec Brothers Transport wants to use methyl bromide to treat logs to kill pests before those logs are shipped to China. As they did just last week, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality hosted a public hearing. Just like last week, the public spoke loudly.

May 14 – Looking for ways to shut down Chemours

The Southern Environmental Law Center – or SELC -- says the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality should shut down Chemours, and they should do it now. On behalf of Cape Fear River Watch, the SELC recently told DEQ they have the power and legal authority to take that step.

May 8 – Elections 2018 – Cohen Wins Close Race

Three Democrats battled in the 20th North Carolina House District, for the right to challenge incumbent state Representative Holly Grange, a Republican. It was a close race.

May 8 – Elections 2018 – Zapple and Boseman Win

In the primary for New Hanover County Commissioner, three Democrats ran for two spots in November's general election: newcomer James Middleton, political veteran Julia Olson-Boseman, and current commissioner Rob Zapple.

May 8 – Elections 2018 – Kyle Horton Wins

Kure Beach physician Kyle Horton and Goldsboro businessman Grayson Parker squared off Tuesday, to be the Democratic nominee to challenge incumbent Republican U.S. Representative David Rouzer, of the 7th Congressional District.

May 7 – Delco Residents Say No to Methyl Bromide

A logging operation in Wilmington pulled their permit request for using methyl bromide as a fumigant in late March. Now a transportation company in Delco, Columbus County, is asking for a Title Five permit to emit up to 140 tons of methyl bromide. A public hearing last week in Delco allowed residents to express their views to North Carolina's Department of Environmental Quality.

May 4 – Elections 2018 – Cruse and Thompson

In Brunswick County, three Republicans are facing off against each other for a seat on the Board of Education in District 5: Gerald Benton, Robert Cruse, and incumbent John Thompson. Today we take a look at Cruse and Thompson.

May 3 – 2018 Elections – Moore and Robbins

Two Democrats are in the primary race for Pender County's Board of Education District 4. Reginald Moore and June Robbins are looking to win a spot in November's general election, to face Republican Ken Smith.

May 2 – New Hanover County Discusses UDO

This week New Hanover County staff and planners met to discuss the new unified development ordinance, or UDO. It's a guideline for how land is to be used and developed in the county. It will be months before the new ordinance is finalized.

April 30 – Elections 2018 – Gary Shipman

Gary Shipman is one of three Democrats hoping to square off in November with North Carolina Representative Holly Grange, a Republican from New Hanover County. The former Chairman of the New Hanover County Democratic Party says Raleigh needs a new voice.

April 27 – Elections 2018 – James Middleton

Three Democrats are on the primary ballot for the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners. Incumbent Rob Zapple, James Middleton and Julia Olson-Boseman. Two of those three will move on to the general election. James Middleton is the political newcomer of the group.

April 27 – Counties Partner On Prescription Drug Effort

To encourage the proper disposal of unwanted medications, New Hanover Regional Medical Center is partnering with regional healthcare, law enforcement, education and safety organizations to hold a medication disposal event in six counties on Saturday, April 28.

April 24 – Elections 2018 – Hunter Ford

Local business owner Hunter Ford is running for North Carolina House District 19, the southern portion of New Hanover County. The seat is currently occupied by his opponent in the primary, Republican Ted Davis. Ford says that change is needed.

April 23 – Two New Studies Show Contaminated Water Sites

The first phase of a North Carolina State University water study on GenX is complete. Nearly every home whose tap water researchers tested last fall showed levels of GenX, and they found other perfluorinated chemicals as well. Meanwhile an environmental group in Washington has released a new map to learn more about bad drinking water across the country.

April 20 – Elections 2018 – Patricia Sykes

North Carolina House District 17 makes up much of Brunswick County. Current Republican Representative Frank Iler is facing challenger Patricia Sykes in the May Primary. Here is more on the incumbent's competition.

April 17 – GenX Tap Water Test Results

The first results from North Carolina State University's testing of tap water in the region have been released. The purpose of the study: to assess current exposure to GenX and related chemicals in people living in the Lower Cape Fear River Basin. Tuesday night researchers explained what was found in samples from 198 homes of New Hanover County residents.

April 16 – Elections 2018 – Rob Zapple

Three Democrats are on the primary ballot for the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners. Incumbent Rob Zapple, James Middleton and Julia Olson-Boseman. Rob Zapple was first elected to the board in 2014.

April 13 – Elections 2018 – Leslie Cohen

There are three Democrats hoping to win the nomination for North Carolina House District 20 and face incumbent Republican Holly Grange in November: Leslie Cohen, John Bauer and Gary Shipman. This is Leslie Cohen's first go at public office.

April 10 – Elections 2018 – Morgan and Cavanaugh

North Carolina's primary election takes place on May 8th – when voters decide on candidates for the general election. Janice Cavanaugh and Christopher Morgan are running for the New Hanover County Board of Education. Morgan is a newcomer, while Cavanaugh has served on the board for 25 years.

April 9 – Elections 2018 – Horton and Parker

Two Democrats – Kyle Horton and Grayson Parker - are battling for the chance to challenge Republican incumbent David Rouzer in the general election for the U.S. House of Representatives District 7 seat. Healthcare is of particular importance to Kyle Horton.

April 6 – Elections 2018 – Meares and Hayes

North Carolina's primary election takes place on May 8th – when voters decide on their November candidates for the general election. Frank Meares and incumbent Don Hayes are Republicans running for the New Hanover County Board of Education.

April 3 – Local Film Industry Gets Boost

North Carolina and Wilmington's film industry got some good news this week. The North Carolina Film and Entertainment Grants program has chosen to support productions in Wilmington and the High Point area.

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