

February 24, 2021

Mr. D. Lee Currey, Director
Water and Science Administration
Maryland Department of the Environment
1800 Washington Blvd., Baltimore, MD 21230-1718
lee.currey@maryland.gov



Re: Jones Falls Illegal Discharges, Fleischmann's Vinegar Plant, 1900 Brand Ave, Baltimore, MD 21209

Dear Mr. Currey:

Founded in 2018, the Friends of The Jones Falls (FTJF), a member-based, volunteer-driven organization in Baltimore City and Baltimore County, is focused on improving the health and sustaining the vitality of the Jones Falls watershed. We organize clean-ups and other conservation efforts, working with local community groups and businesses to make positive, impactful improvements along the waterway.

We are alarmed by the ongoing noncompliance of the Fleischmann's Vinegar facility, 1900 Brand Avenue, located between the Jones Falls and I-83 off W. Coldspring La., regarding toxic discharge into the waterway. During late summer 2021, a significant fishkill in the Jones Falls occurred due to a deficiency in Fleischmann's de-chlorination process. We have learned from the Baltimore Harbor Riverkeeper, Alice Volpitta, that this facility continues to discharge highly acidic materials into the Jones Falls without any remedy or recourse.

We are distressed by decades of persistent, unremedied pollution from this facility, and the apparent lack of intervention by The Maryland Department of the Environment. The Friends of The Jones Falls calls for polluters in the watershed to be held fully accountable by our regulatory agencies that are charged with enforcing Maryland environmental laws and with effect.

We request a meeting with MDE officials to understand whether and how this facility is being held responsible for continued damage to The Jones Falls. We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Sandy Sparks, President
Friends of The Jones Falls, Inc.
2942 Guilford Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21218
srsparks@verizon.net 410-980-5844

cc: Secretary Ben Grumbles, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)
Ms. Allison B. O'Hanlon, Chief, Chemical and Biological Monitoring Division, MDE
Ms. Catherine Libertz, Director, Water Division, U. S. EPA Region 3
Mr. Kenneth Simril, Vice President and General Manager, Fleischmann's, Cerritos, CA
Mr. Philip Toomey, Chairman of the Board, Kerry Group
Mr. Tony Bridges, Executive Director, Blue Water Baltimore
Ms. Alice Volpitta, Baltimore Harbor Waterkeeper
Delegates Regina T. Boyce, District 43 and Sheila Ruth, District 44B, FTJF Board Members *ex officio*