JOSH HAWLEY
MISSOURI

381 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
TELEPHONE: (202) 224–6154
FAX: (202) 228–0526

WWW.HAWLEY.SENATE.GOV

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510–2509

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July 31, 2025

Robert K. Ortberg
President & CEO
The Boeing Company

Jeff Shockey
EVP of Government Operations, Global Public Policy, & Corporate Strategy
The Boeing Company

Mr. Ortberg:

I write concerning new reports that a Boeing facility in north St. Louis leaked up to a thousand gallons of toxic nitric acid into Coldwater Creek.[1] As you know, nitric acid is a caustic industrial agent that can cause burns and respiratory problems, and in high enough concentrations, death. You must continue to work to remedy this latest spill and ensure it never happens again.

The spill threatens the lives and health of residents in my state. And this is not the first time. In June 2023, a Boeing industrial wastewater treatment plant released high levels of hexavalent chromium—a carcinogen—into Coldwater Creek.[2] As you may know, residents of this region have also suffered for years from the presence of nuclear contamination in the creek bed due to Manhattan Project-related activities. That remediation is still ongoing. It is disappointing that corporate neglect is following government neglect when it comes to the safety of my constituents who live near Coldwater Creek.

Your company has stated that, "the situation was safely resolved."[3] Missourians deserve to know more. Since this is the second time your company has possibly endangered residents, you must take remedial actions. Please answer the following questions by August 15, 2025:

1. Have Missourians been harmed by the July 25, 2025 toxic spill into Coldwater Creek?
2. If so, what actions have you taken or will you take to remedy such harms?
3. What actions have you taken or will you take to ensure that similar leakages of toxic chemicals do not occur in the future?

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Josh Hawley
United States Senator

[1] Hundreds of gallons of nitric acid leak from North County facility into Coldwater Creek, First Alert 4, https://www.firstalert4.com/2025/07/25/multiple-agencies-respond-chemical-spill-north-st-louis-county/ (July 25, 2025).
[2] Cleanup started after chemical spill near St. Louis airport, KSDK, https://www.ksdk.com/article/news/local/dnr-chemicals-spilled-coldwater-creek-june-25/63-cc42110e-4e17-4e3b-bb46-cee315a0e4ed (June 27, 2024).
[3] Hundreds of gallons of nitric acid leak from North County facility into Coldwater Creek, First Alert 4, https://www.firstalert4.com/2025/07/25/multiple-agencies-respond-chemical-spill-north-st-louis-county/ (July 25, 2025).