



Winnebago County

Health Department

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Illinois EPA Sampling Detects Elevated Metals in Groundwater Monitoring Wells at Former Beloit Corporation Superfund Site in Rockton

Source of the contamination currently unknown; private well sampling being initiated

SPRINGFIELD – State and local officials have confirmed the presence of elevated metals, including antimony, cadmium, chromium, and nickel, in groundwater monitoring wells located at the former Beloit Corporation Superfund site. Groundwater monitoring wells do not serve as drinking water sources for the public. There were no metals found in the municipal water supply for the Village of Rockton which was tested on June 21, 2021. Initial private well sampling will be conducted near the monitoring wells to determine if any private drinking water wells have been impacted.

The groundwater monitoring wells in which the elevated metals were detected are part of the monitoring well network for the former [Beloit Corporation Superfund site](#). The groundwater monitoring wells are used to collect data on the direction of groundwater flow, the geology of the area, and the extent of contamination. The monitoring wells with elevated levels of metals are all located within the Superfund site. Of the 20 monitoring wells sampled, elevated levels of metals were identified in 16 wells.

The samples with the elevated metal results were collected from monitoring wells following the fire at the Chemtool, Inc. facility, which is located on this Superfund site. Metals were not previously contaminants of concern at the Beloit Corp Superfund site. The Illinois EPA is currently evaluating possible sources of the metals contamination but cannot confirm the source or cause of the contamination at this time.

Following the detection of metals in the monitoring wells, Illinois EPA consulted with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Winnebago County Health Department (WCHD) and are coordinating initial sampling of private wells located in close proximity to the monitoring wells with elevated metal detections. The geology of the area is complex, and the proximity to the Rock River can cause variations in the groundwater flow. Private wells may not necessarily be impacted the same as the monitoring wells.

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As a precaution, until more testing is conducted to identify and narrow the impacted area, residents that have private wells and live in the Blackhawk neighborhood adjacent to the Chemtool property are recommended at the direction of IDPH and WCHD, to NOT use their private well water for drinking or cooking. Bottled, packaged, or filtered water can be used for drinking, making ice, preparing infant formula, and cooking. Once results from the initial sampling of private wells are finalized, Illinois EPA, IDPH and WCHD will determine next steps if additional sampling is needed.

It is expected that a majority of residents are not using their private well water as drinking water. During the Beloit Corp Superfund Site Remedial Investigation, Illinois EPA funded the installation and maintenance of carbon filter treatment units for residences in the Blackhawk Acres Subdivision to ensure residents are not exposed to drinking water which may pose health risks. A majority of those residences connected to the Village of Rockton community water supply and should no longer be using their private well water for drinking water. However, IDPH and WCHD will provide Illinois EPA with technical support and local information on private wells still being used by residents.

While some metals are essential nutrients, exposure to high levels can cause a variety of health concerns depending on the metal. Health interpretation of results collected on private property will be provided by the Illinois Department of Public Health directly to property owners.

Illinois EPA has posted the final groundwater monitoring well sample data on the Agency's website on both the [Beloit Corporation](#) and the [Chemtool page](#).

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