



NEWS

R E L E A S E

Illinois Department of Public Health

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SOUTH CHICAGO HEIGHTS AREA WATER WELL TESTING RECOMMENDED

SPRINGFIELD, IL – Homeowners who obtain their drinking water from private wells in the South Chicago Heights area are advised to have the water tested for possible groundwater contamination, the Illinois Department of Public Health announced today.

Test results of samples collected by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) of the city's municipal water wells revealed levels of vinyl chloride exceeding the maximum contaminant level and low levels of benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylene (BTEX) that could also be present in the area's private wells.

Although the contaminants were found in South Chicago Heights source water, contaminants are removed at the city's water supply treatment plant and the water quality meets U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standards. Those who have questions about the city's drinking water supply can contact Joan Muraro, Illinois EPA, at 217-785-7209.

Persons with private wells located within the area south of East 26th Street, west of Chicago Avenue, north of Steger Road (Cook county line), and west of Cottage Grove Road, are encouraged to have their water tested by a private laboratory.

A list of private laboratories approved for testing can be obtained by calling Joe O'Connor with the Illinois Department of Public Health's West Chicago office at 630-293-6800 or Dave Rohbock with the Cook County Health Department at 708-492-2035. Once samples have been analyzed, residents can call the health department for an explanation of the test results.

Exposure to vinyl chloride for long periods has been found to increase the risk of liver cancer. Long-term exposure to benzene can have harmful effects on the bone marrow.

Notice of possible private well contamination is required by 2002 amendments to the Illinois Groundwater Protection Act.

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