



NEWS

RELEASE

June 26, 2007

Fairmount area water well testing recommended

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – The Illinois Department of Public Health is advising residents who obtain their drinking water from private wells in the Fairmount area to test their water for possible groundwater contamination. Routine testing of the city's municipal water wells by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) detected contamination could be present in the area's private wells.

Although the contaminants were found in Fairmount's source water, contaminants are removed at the city's water supply treatment plant to meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standards so those on the public water supply are not affected.

Persons with private wells located within a $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile radius of the intersection of Main Street and the Norfolk Southern Railroad, are encouraged to have their water tested by a private laboratory.

Contaminates detected include methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE) and dichloroethane (1,2-DCA), but at levels less than groundwater quality standards.

A list of private laboratories approved for testing can be obtained by calling Illinois Department of Public Health's Champaign office at 217-278-5900. Once samples have been analyzed, residents can call the health department for an explanation of the test results.

The risk of adverse health effects depends on the level of contaminants in the water and the duration of exposure. Exposure to elevated levels of 1,2-DCA can cause nausea, dizziness and headaches. Long-term exposure may affect the liver and kidney.

MTBE has been used since the 1980s as an additive in unleaded gasoline. Animal studies suggest that drinking elevated levels of MTBE may cause gastrointestinal irritation and can adversely affect the nervous system.

This information has been compiled from historic data and is provided to the public to ensure full disclosure of state records.

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