



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Ground Water Sampling Event

Holly Drive Site, Elkhart County

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Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.
Governor

Thomas W. Easterly
Commissioner

100 North Senate Avenue, Mail Code 66-22, Indianapolis, IN 46204
Phone: (317) 233-2570 Toll Free: (800) 451-6027

Background:

- On April 22, 2009, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management's (IDEM's) Site Investigation Section received a call from the Elkhart County Health Department stating that a resident on Holly Drive in Elkhart, Indiana, had submitted a drinking water sample to an independent laboratory for analysis. The analysis of the water revealed elevated levels of tetrachloroethylene (PCE).

Description:

- Staff from IDEM will be conducting a ground water investigation in the area around Holly Drive and Greenleaf Blvd. in Elkhart, Elkhart County, from September 21-23, 2010.
- The purpose of this investigation is to identify the source of this ground water contamination.
- IDEM may be using a direct push sampling device to collect discreet ground water and subsurface soil samples to aid in this investigation and may request access to properties to obtain these samples.
- IDEM will also be investigating some private wells in the area of concern to determine whether contamination may be affecting their water supply.
- Tetrachloroethylene (PCE) is a volatile organic compound manufactured for use in the dry-cleaning of fabrics and for metal degreasing. It is also used to make other chemicals and used in some consumer products, including some paint and spot removers, water repellents, brake and wood cleaners, glues and suede protectors. Other names used for tetrachloroethylene include PERC, tetrachloroethene, perchloroethylene and PCE.

Environmental Impacts:

- PCE is a nonflammable, colorless liquid at room temperature.
- PCE readily evaporates into air and has an ether-like odor.
- Most people stop noticing the odor of PCE in the air after a short time, therefore odor is not a reliable warning signal of PCE exposure.
- Exposure to PCE can happen in many ways but most commonly occurs by releases that leach through soil into the ground water and subsequently are taken up into drinking water wells.
- Human exposure to high levels of PCE could cause health problems. The accompanying fact sheet from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention explains these compounds and their affects in more detail.

IDEM's Role:

- IDEM is responsible for protecting human health and the environment while providing for safe industrial, agricultural, commercial, and governmental operations vital to a prosperous economy.
- IDEM's Site Investigation Program works to assess potential environmental hazards and prioritize contaminated sites for further needed actions. Once the sample results have been evaluated, IDEM Site Investigation staff and management will make a decision regarding future actions.
- IDEM's Site Investigation Program staff will be available to answer questions and address concerns of homeowners.

Citizen's Role:

- IDEM will ask homeowners in the area of the study to allow staff access to their property and water supply to collect water samples. The process will entail running the water for approximately fifteen (15) minutes to purge the well and collecting three (3) small vials of water for delivery to and analysis by a laboratory contracted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The sample must bypass a water softener, if applicable, and can often be taken from an outside faucet.
- IDEM may also request access to private property with direct push drilling equipment. The direct push device will be used to drill a two (2) inch diameter hole to ground water to collect samples of soils and ground water in a specific area. Holes drilled by the direct push device will be refilled with impermeable clay and afterwards are unnoticeable.

More Information:

- For information about the sampling event being performed by IDEM, contact T.J. Doreff with IDEM's Site Investigations Program, at (317) 234-0345; toll free at (800) 451-6027, ext. 2-3220; or via e-mail at tdoreff@idem.IN.gov.
- For information about IDEM's Site Investigations Program, please visit IDEM's website at <http://www.in.gov/idem/4143.htm>.
- For fact sheets and information about PCE, or other ground water contaminants, please visit the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry's website at: <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/substances/toxsubstance.asp?toxid=48>.
- For additional health-related information, please contact:
 - Federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), at (800) 621-8431, ext. 3-3436.
 - Environmental Epidemiology Division of the Indiana State Department of Health, at (317) 351-7190 or alexand@isdh.IN.gov.
 - Elkhart County Health Department, at 574-875-3391.
- For media inquiries, please contact IDEM's Office of Media Relations, at (317) 233-4927; toll free at (800) 451-6027, ext. 3-4927; or by e-mail at ahartsoc@idem.IN.gov.