

## FACT SHEET



### INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

## Morgantown (Highland and Sycamore Streets)

### Soil Contamination Site Inspection

Office of Land Quality – Federal Programs Section – Site Investigation Program

317-232-3220 • 800-451-6027

[www.idem.IN.gov](http://www.idem.IN.gov)

100 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46204

#### **Background Information:**

- Elevated levels of arsenic and chromium have been detected at a parcel located in the Town of Morgantown near the intersection of Highland and Sycamore Streets.
- Arsenic and chromium are naturally occurring elements. They have also been used in residential and industrial applications, including as a wood preservation treatment in pressure-treated lumber. Chromium also has also been used in many industrial applications, including steelmaking, plating, dyeing and leather tanning. Exposure to arsenic and chromium can be through direct contact with soil, ingesting affected food or water or breathing contaminated air.
- In 2020, the IDEM Site Investigation Program conducted a Preliminary Assessment at the property using an X-ray fluorescence (XRF) handheld screening device. The results indicated that there were some localized levels of arsenic and chromium above established levels.
- Under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. EPA, the IDEM Site Investigation Program will conduct a site inspection to determine if any residences in the immediate area have been impacted.

#### **Environmental and Health Impacts:**

- The soil at the Highland and Sycamore Street Soil Contamination Site has been shown to have slightly elevated levels of heavy metals, particularly arsenic and chromium. However, it is unknown if the contaminated soil has impacted private residences in the area.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has classified arsenic as a known human carcinogen.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has classified chromium as a known human carcinogen.

People can be exposed to heavy metals from coming into direct contact with contaminated soil.

#### **Next Steps:**

- During the Spring/Summer of 2024, IDEM's Site Investigation Program will conduct a surface soil investigation in Morgantown to determine if any residences are impacted by high levels of heavy metals.
- IDEM is requesting access to private property in various locations to collect surface soil samples from residential properties to aid in this investigation.
  - Property owners who are asked to aid in this investigation will be asked to sign a property access agreement.
  - The sampling will be done at no cost to the property owner.
  - IDEM will provide the property owners with their surface soil sample results at no cost.
  - If excessive levels of contamination are discovered, IDEM may conduct further investigations to determine the source and the extent of the contamination and will work with homeowners and businesses to determine how best to reduce exposure to any contamination present.

#### **Additional Information:**

- The public may direct questions and concerns regarding IDEM's environmental investigation in the Morgantown area, to Dan Chesterson, IDEM Project Manager, at 317-233-7528; toll free at 800-451-6027, ext. 3-7528; or by e-mail at [dchester@idem.in.gov](mailto:dchester@idem.in.gov).

- Questions and concerns about health-related impacts should be directed to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) at 312-886-1462 or to the Morgan County Health Department at 765-342-6621.
- Along with this fact sheet, IDEM is distributing the *Arsenic and Chromium ToxFAQs™* fact sheet from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry that describes these metals and their effects in greater detail. This ToxFAQ can also be accessed on the ATSDR website at <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts2.pdf> and <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts7.pdf>.
- For information about IDEM's Site Investigation Program, visit IDEM's website at [idem.IN.gov/cleanups/investigation-and-cleanup-programs/site-investigation](http://idem.IN.gov/cleanups/investigation-and-cleanup-programs/site-investigation).
- The news media may contact IDEM's media department, at 317-232-8596 or by e-mail at [media@idem.IN.gov](mailto:media@idem.IN.gov).