



West Minnesota Street Groundwater Contamination Investigation

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

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100 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46204

Background Information:

- In 2016, chlorinated volatile organic compounds (e.g., vinyl chloride, etc.) were detected in residential wells near the 2300 block of West Minnesota Street.
- The West Minnesota Street wells are located near the bridge over Eagle Creek, southwest of downtown Indianapolis, in Marion County, Indiana.
- The Citizens Energy Group currently operates a public water supply wellfield (Riverside Wellfield) north of the Site that supplies drinking water to a population of 345,134 residents in a blended system.
- Indianapolis's current drinking water has been tested and does not exceed the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for chlorinated volatile organic compounds. The MCL is a safe drinking water limit established by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) under the Safe Drinking Water Act.
- Chlorinated volatile organic compounds include many chemicals with broad industrial and commercial applications, such as metal parts degreasers or dry-cleaning solvents, such as tetrachlorethylene. These chemicals can also serve as feedstocks for other materials such as vinyl chloride.
- Vinyl chloride is a colorless gas with a mild, sweet odor. It burns easily and is not stable at high temperatures. Vinyl chloride is a manufactured substance that does not occur naturally. It can be formed when other substances such as trichloroethane, trichloroethylene, and tetrachloroethylene are broken down. Vinyl chloride is used to make polyvinyl chloride (PVC), which is used to make a variety of plastic products, including pipes, wire and cable coatings, and packaging materials.
- Under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. EPA, IDEM's Site Investigation Program, IDEM will conduct a Site Inspection to determine if any other wells in the area have been impacted and to attempt to identify the source(s) of the groundwater contamination discovered in the Riverside Wellfield.

Next Steps:

- During the summer of 2024, IDEM's Site Investigation Program will conduct a groundwater investigation in Indianapolis to determine if any residences or businesses that utilize private drinking water wells are impacted by the vinyl chloride groundwater contamination.
- IDEM is requesting access to private property in various locations to collect groundwater from residential and business wells 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 groundwater sampling results at no cost.

Environmental and Health Impacts:

- The finished water currently being delivered by Citizens Energy Group to the city of Indianapolis to homes does not have vinyl chloride detections. However, it is unknown if the contaminated groundwater is impacting private residential and business wells in the area.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has classified vinyl chloride as a known human carcinogen.
- People can be exposed to vinyl chloride by ingesting contaminated water or by breathing vinyl chloride gases released from contaminated water into enclosed spaces.

Additional Information:

- The public may direct questions and concerns regarding IDEM's environmental investigation in the Indianapolis area, including additional information on sampling results to date, environmental impacts of vinyl chloride, and potential drinking water impacts, to John Hockemeyer, IDEM Project Manager, at 317-232-5675; toll free at 800-451-6027; or by e-mail at JHockeme@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 Marion County Health Department at 317-221-2290.
- Along with this fact sheet, IDEM is distributing the *Vinyl Chloride ToxFAQs™* fact sheet from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry that describes vinyl chloride and its effects in greater detail. This ToxFAQ can also be accessed on the ATSDR website at atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts20.pdf
- For additional information on the Safe Drinking Water Act, visit U.S. EPA's website at epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-clean-water-act
- For information about IDEM's Site Investigation Program, visit IDEM's website at 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