



Region 7

Iowa
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Fact Sheet

October 2003

EPA Investigating Groundwater Contamination Grand Island, Nebraska

INTRODUCTION

During the week of October 20, 2003, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7 (EPA) in coordination with the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) will begin field sampling in Grand Island, NE. The purpose of this sampling is to help determine the source of groundwater contamination in southwest Grand Island.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 2001 the Nebraska Health and Human Services System (NHHSS) and the city of Grand Island found contamination in municipal and private wells. The state and the city began conducting more sampling and discovered that this contamination extended to the southwestern city limits and beyond. This sampling in particular has found tetrachloroethylene and 1,1 dichloroethylene at levels above drinking water standards in a municipal well and several private wells in this area. In August 2003 EPA was requested by the state to assist in finding the source of this contamination.

WHAT WILL EPA DO?

The EPA and its contractors will begin collecting field samples in an area west of Highway 281 and South of Stolley Park Road. This sampling will consist of collecting ground water samples throughout the area. The EPA will be working closely with both NDEQ and city officials.

The EPA and its contractors will mobilize to the site the week of October 20, 2003 and anticipate sampling activities will occur throughout the week.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL CONTAMINANTS?

The contamination found so far includes tetrachloroethylene (also known as perchloroethylene or PCE) and 1,1 dichloroethylene (1,1 DCE). Once they are released into the ground, both PCE and 1,1 DCE have a tendency to either evaporate or leach into the groundwater. They are broken down very slowly by microbes in the soil.

The sampling done by the state and city so far have found levels of PCE and 1,1 DCE in municipal and private wells that were greater than the EPA maximum contaminant levels. These are health-based levels that have been established by the EPA as the most contamination allowable in drinking water.

MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE

If you have questions about this fact sheet or need additional site information, please contact:

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