



Region 7

Iowa
Kansas
Missouri
Nebraska

Fact Sheet

August 2003

Perchlorate Discovery and Investigations in Iowa

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Then . . .

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7, conducted a study of former grain bin sites in 2000 - 2001. These investigations focused on chemicals used as grain fumigants. Other sampling activities conducted in conjunction with the former grain bin sampling activities focused on perchlorate. This contaminant was discovered in a few private wells within a one-mile radius of several Former U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Grain Bin storage facilities.

In 2000, EPA sampled three wells in Napier, Iowa and two wells in Ewart, Iowa. One of the wells in Napier served 16 residences. No contaminants were detected in this well.

One of the three wells sampled in Napier had a level of perchlorate that was within the ranges of EPA's provisional reference dose of 4 - 18 parts per billion, which is protective of human health.

One of the two wells sampled in Ewart had a level of perchlorate above the provisional reference dose; however, this well was not used for drinking water.

All of the sampling results were provided to the respective well owners and to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) in 2000.

Now . . .

EPA Region 7 is currently conducting an assessment in Hills, Iowa, one of the locations where perchlorate was initially discovered. Additional sampling will be conducted in Napier and Ewart, Iowa.

The purpose of these investigations is to determine whether there is a threat to public health that needs to be addressed, and to determine whether additional response actions are necessary. These investigations are scheduled to begin December 1, 2003, and will be coordinated with IDNR and IDPH.

ABOUT THE CONTAMINANT

Perchlorate is both a naturally occurring and a man-made chemical. It is extremely soluble, stable, and mobile. Most of the perchlorate manufactured in the United States is used as the main ingredient in solid rocket fuel. It is also used in explosives, fireworks, and chemical fertilizers.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about perchlorate, you can access the following websites:

- www.epa.gov/ncea/
- www.epa.gov/swerrims/docs/perchlorate/
- www.epa.gov/OGWDW/ccl/perchlorate/perchlorate.html
- www.clu-in.org/contaminantfocus/default.focus/sec/perchlorate/cat/Overview/

If you have questions or need additional information please contact:

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