



## Information Sheet

May 3, 1998

57<sup>th</sup> and North Broadway - Riverview Site  
Wichita, Kansas

### **Introduction**

At the request of community members, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) brought a physician to the community so area residents could discuss their health concerns. After consulting with a community leader on meeting format and date, we decided to hold two availability sessions on Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>. Area residents met one-on-one with ATSDR's physician, Dr. Robert Johnson, for as long as they needed to address their health concerns. Steve Kinser, the Remedial Project Manager for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also was available to answer questions.

The purpose of this information sheet is to provide information on the most commonly asked questions by those attending the availability session. If you have health concerns that you would like to discuss with an ATSDR physician, please call 1-800-42ATSDR 9-5:30 p.m. EST weekdays and ask for Dr. Robert Johnson. For general information on ATSDR's activities please call David Parker, Regional Representative, (913) 551-7772.

### **What kind of health problems can I expect from drinking the water?**

Although some of the levels of vinyl chloride and trichloroethylene (TCE) in area residents' water may have been above the acceptable limits set by the EPA, ATSDR does not expect any health problems. When these acceptable limits are established, they are set far below where we expect health problems to occur. If you were drinking water that was shown to have contaminants above the acceptable limits, however, we recommend that you discuss this with your regular doctor.

### **What lab tests can be done?**

There is no particular lab test that we recommend. In general, measuring these particular contaminants in your body would not be possible at this time, if you have stopped using contaminated water more than a week ago. Even if lab tests were performed, measures of the effects on the body are not specific for these chemicals. You and your doctor should decide on the best approach to address your health concerns.

### **Why hasn't the blood testing for benzene been done by ATSDR as promised?**

ATSDR's recommendation for testing area residents' blood for benzene was an error. Since making this recommendation, ATSDR

has realized that blood testing would not provide a definitive answer on whether area residents have been exposed to benzene.

**Should I tell my doctor I have been drinking contaminated water?**

Yes. It is important that your doctor know what chemicals were found in your water.

**What should I do if my doctor doesn't know anything about the effects of these chemicals?**

ATSDR has already provided informational fact sheets about these chemicals to a small number of physicians in your area. If you would like your doctor to have an opportunity to receive this education and information, please call Steve Blackwell, ATSDR, Division of Health Education and Promotion, 1-800-42ATSDR.

**Environmental Concerns**

The next three questions also were asked often during the availability sessions. However, EPA typically addresses questions focussed on environmental concerns. For further information, please call Steve Kinser, EPA, Remedial Project Manager, 913-551-7728.

**How long have the chemicals been in the water?**

In 1994, well water samples were taken in the northeast portion of the site. One household was found to have greater than maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for TCE in its well. No other houses, including those in the immediate vicinity, were found to have contaminated water. EPA assumes that the TCE contamination entered the area just prior to the 1994 well water sampling.

**Why hasn't something been done years ago?**

All analytical data indicated that the plume was not migrating beyond the flood control channel. The single exception was the 1994 sample identified above which was considered an anomaly since no other contamination was found in the area. The area of contamination was known to be served by a public water supply and there appeared to be no immediate risk to anyone. There appeared to be no need for an expedited response based upon the information at hand.

**Who is going to pay to have my water hooked up to the city?**

The Record of Decision (ROD), signed on June 5, 1998, provides for the payment of all direct charges for connecting affected residents to the City of Wichita's water supply. The ROD identifies 54 residences as being affected by the contaminant plume and eligible for the following services. EPA will pay for the following services for the affected residents: 1) tapping the distribution line; 2) connecting to and setting the meter; 3) severing the private well from the residential distribution system; 4) inspecting the residential distribution system and determining whether a pressure reduction valve is needed and, if one is needed, installing the valve; 5) connecting the residential distribution system to the meter; and 6) doing reasonable restoration to the landscape disturbed by the above. The tax assessment levied against all property, regardless of the property owner's decision to connect to the public water system or not, will not be paid by EPA.