

Southwest Indianapolis Air Toxics Study

Article 1

State studies air quality in Southwest Indianapolis

At a public meeting on March 11, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) will present the results of a local air toxics study. The study measured the air on Indianapolis' Southwest side to see if local conditions are impacting human health and the environment.

The March 11 meeting will take place at the Mary Rigg Neighborhood Center at 5:45 p.m. Before and after the brief presentation, IDEM staff will be available to explain the details of the study one-on-one. They will be joined by technical experts and neighborhood members who assisted with the study.

The study, which began in October 2006, used air sampling, air emission data and computer modeling to determine if air toxics pose a health risk to the residents in this area. Air toxics are natural and manmade chemicals that can cause chronic and acute health effects in humans. Manmade air toxics are in emissions from driving motor vehicles, household cleaners, tobacco smoke, paints, adhesives, small businesses, large industries and many other activities.

The southwest side has some of the largest industrial manufacturers in Indianapolis and hundreds of small businesses. There are also over 60,000 residents and several schools in the study area.

From October 2006 through 2008, IDEM sampled the air every six days and contacted hundreds of businesses to gather emission data. Motor vehicle emissions and other sources of air toxics were estimated and included. Complex computer modeling merged the data together to calculate the health risk from air toxics.

This article is the first in a series written by IDEM to explain the Southwest Indianapolis Air Toxics Study.

Additional articles will appear in future editions of the West Side Community News and at www.idem.IN.gov/4500.htm.

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IDEM's Southwest Indianapolis Air Toxics Study

Who: Indiana Department of Environmental Management, City of Indianapolis, U. S. EPA, air toxics experts, and local residents

What: Air quality study that examined 74 air toxics and 12 metals in Southwest Indianapolis

Where: The study area is between 10th Street to the north, Bluff Road to the east, High School Road to the west and Hanna Avenue to the south.

When: Air samples were taken between 2006 and 2008.

Why: National air toxics models identified Southwest Indianapolis as an area that could potentially have high air emissions.

How: IDEM used a U.S. EPA grant to take air samples, collect emissions data, and run computer modeling.