



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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IDEM announces sampling results for East Chicago's public water system

INDIANAPOLIS - The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) today announced the results of water testing conducted in April and May of select properties in East Chicago, Ind.

IDEM conducted sampling at 27 properties around the city, and all test results were below U.S. EPA's action level (AL) for lead with the exception of one draw at one sample location. The sole exception was a second draw sample of 19.1 parts per billion (ppb), slightly above U.S. EPA's AL of 15 ppb. However, the third draw sample result at that same location was 3.7 ppb, well below U.S. EPA's AL. These results indicate the presence of internal lead pipes or fixtures at the sample location, but confirm that the water coming into the home from the water utility contains lead levels well below U.S. EPA limits. The results also show that running water for at least three minutes significantly reduces lead levels in drinking water.

IDEM also tested for copper and orthophosphate. All copper tests were well below U.S. EPA's AL of 1300 ppb. Nearly all properties tested above U.S. EPA's recommended minimum level for orthophosphate indicating that drinking water pipes are being thoroughly coated to prevent lead leaching into the drinking water system.

"There is no higher priority for this agency than the safety of Hoosiers," said IDEM Commissioner Bruno Pigott. "As a result of these tests, I am confident that corrosion control is working and can say with certainty that no system-wide lead issues are present in East Chicago's drinking water system."

Methodology Background

All properties tested were Tier 1 properties meaning they contain lead pipes, lead service lines, and/or copper pipes with lead soldering. IDEM's testing went beyond the minimum single draw sample required by U.S. EPA's Lead and Copper Rule (LCR). IDEM staff tested for lead, copper and orthophosphate levels. Three tests, one liter each, were performed at each location. The first draw sample was taken to verify LCR compliance. The second draw was a one minute flush showing results for drinking water contained within internal plumbing and possibly the external service line. The third draw was a three minute flush which should capture drinking water coming into the home from the external water lines owned by the utility.

For additional information about water quality in Indiana, please visit <http://in.gov/idem/cleanwater/>. Test results are available online at <http://healthyec.in.gov>.

About IDEM

IDEM (www.idem.IN.gov) implements federal and state regulations regarding the environment. Through compliance assistance, incentive programs and educational outreach, the agency encourages and aids businesses and citizens in protecting Hoosiers and our environment.

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