

## NOTICE TO WATER WELL OWNERS

### REGARDING ARSENIC IN GROUNDWATER

Groundwater in your area is known to contain arsenic in concentrations exceeding the maximum contaminant level of 10 parts per billion (ppb). It usually occurs naturally, mostly in unconsolidated sand gravel formations, rather than from contamination.

Some studies have shown that drinking water containing elevated levels of arsenic can cause the following health effects: thickening and discoloration of the skin, sometimes leading to skin cancer; digestive problems such as stomach pain, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea; and numbness in hands and feet.

Many of these health effects are often seen with other common illnesses, so detecting arsenic poisoning can be difficult. If you or your family members are concerned about health problems you believe to be related to arsenic in your water, you should consult your physician.

It is recommended that your well water be tested for arsenic concentration. A list of laboratories certified to test water for arsenic is available on the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency web site at <http://www.epa.state.il.us/labs/pdf/chem.pdf>, or if you are not able to access their web site, contact your local health department. The laboratory cost for performing this test is quite nominal. If the level of arsenic is 5 ppb or more, consider further testing to determine if the level of concentration changes over time.

If arsenic in your well water meets or exceeds the maximum contaminant level, you can reduce your exposure to it by using bottled water for drinking and cooking, treating the well water, constructing a new well (does not work in some situations), or connecting to a public water supply. Methods for water treatment include reverse osmosis, home distillation, deionization, and activated alumina media filter.

For additional information on water treatment, contact the Water Quality Association at 630-505-0160, and the National Sanitation Foundation, 313-769-8010.

For further information, contact Tazewell County Health Department at 309-935-5511, ext 272 or the Illinois Department of Public Health at 217-782-5830 or TTY (for hearing impaired use only) 800-547-0466.