

(This notice was posted in early 2003
and is being kept on-line for information)

Chemical Found in Four Inactive Wells in Wilmington

Water Supply from Maple Meadow Brook Aquifer Suspended Pending Further Tests

The Town of Wilmington announced today that preliminary results of on-going, comprehensive water quality testing have indicated the presence of NDMA (N-nitrosodimethylamine) in four inactive wells in the Maple Meadow Brook Aquifer. These water supply wells have been inactive since the fall of 2002. **Test results also show that the Town's drinking water does not contain NDMA.**

The testing was conducted by the Olin Corporation under the supervision of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Water sample locations included eleven points in the water distribution system, various locations at the Butters Row Treatment plant, and wells located in the Maple Meadow Brook Aquifer.

Although test results show that the Town's current water supply does not contain NDMA, Wilmington's Water Department Superintendent Michael Woods has suspended further use of all water supply wells in the aquifer. "As a precautionary measure we will continue to keep these wells off-line until more information and test data are gathered concerning the presence and extent of NDMA in the aquifer," said Woods. Woods continued, "Based on the test results, there is no NDMA in the Town's drinking water."

NDMA, while found in small quantities in some everyday products, including certain foods and cosmetics, has been shown to be carcinogenic in animal studies. As a result, it is considered to be a probable human carcinogen. According to the World Health Organization, NDMA is no longer used commercially or industrially in the United States but continues to be released as a by-product and contaminant from various industries and from municipal wastewater treatment plants. Releases of NDMA to the environment have been associated with the manufacture of pesticides, rubber tires, alkylamines, and dyes. DEP officials believe that NDMA is present in the Maple Meadow Brook Aquifer primarily as a result of historical releases of hazardous materials at the Olin Corporation site, 51 Eames Street.

Public water supplies are not ordinarily tested for the presence of NDMA, and there is no federal drinking water standard. DEP's Office of Research and Standards has derived a drinking water guideline at 10ng/L (ten parts per trillion) for a thirty-year exposure period and an immediate action level of 200ng/L (two hundred parts per trillion). In addition, DEP recently established water quality guidelines as well as a protocol for NDMA testing for the Wilmington water supply.

Samples collected from the inactive wells contained NDMA at concentration levels ranging from 32 parts per trillion to 166 parts per trillion. With levels less than 200 parts per trillion, the Town is not required to take immediate action. However, Town Manager Michael Caira said, "Even though the contaminant levels did not require a mandatory shut-down, keeping these wells off-line will eliminate any exposure to NDMA and ensure the safety of our public water supply." Caira further explained, "Although no NDMA has been detected in the Town Park well or in the Town's distribution system, we intend to keep all wells that are located in the Maple Meadow Brook Aquifer off-line as long as the threat exists."

For additional information, contact: Michael Woods, Wilmington Water Superintendent (978-658-4711); Shelly Newhouse, Wilmington Board of Health (978-658-4298); Stephen Johnson, DEP Chief of Site Management Section (978-661-7710); William D. Sweet, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) 1-888-422-8737 or the following websites: <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles/phs141.html> or http://www.grac.org/wong_ndma.pdf

Preliminary NDMA Testing Results

Well	NDMA
Butters Row 1	100 ng/L
Btters Row 2	32 ng/L
Chestnut St. 1A	38 ng/L
Chestnut St. 1	166 ng/L
TownPark Well	None Detected

Based on available data, the Board of Health concurs with the decision of the Water Superintendent that as a precaution the wells in which NDMA was detected will remain off-line.

Prior to putting the wells on-line the Board of Health will require information demonstrating the safety of the wells.