



United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Region 5
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Illinois, Indiana,
Michigan, Minnesota,
Ohio, Wisconsin

Environmental NEWS RELEASE



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MEDIA AVAILABILITY BEFORE DEC. 13 MEETING: Environmental and health officials will be available to brief media from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. prior to the Dec. 13 meeting at the St. Louis Park Recreation Center, 3700 Monterey Drive.

F O R I M M E D I A T E R E L E A S E

No. 07-OPA236

ST. LOUIS PARK, MINN., ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY BEGINS; MEETINGS DEC. 13 AND DEC. 15

CHICAGO (Dec. 4, 2007) — U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota Department of Health and the city of St. Louis Park have begun a study to determine the extent and any potential risks from underground chemical vapors in St. Louis Park, Minn.

Meetings to discuss the study will be held Thursday, Dec 13, 7 p.m., and Saturday, Dec. 15, 2 p.m. at the St. Louis Park Recreation Center, 3700 Monterey Drive. Doors will open 90 minutes prior to the meeting start time so property owners can meet one-on-one with officials prior to the presentation.

The study involves an estimated 270 properties near the intersection of Highway 7 and Wooddale Avenue. About 20 percent of these are municipal, commercial or industrial properties and include St. Louis Park High School, 6425 W. 33rd Street and Park Spanish Immersion School in the Central Community Center, 6300 Walker St. A letter explaining the study has been sent to homes and businesses in the area.

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The study was prompted by the discovery of vapors from volatile organic compounds, or VOCs, in area ground water samples. The VOCs do not affect local drinking water supplies but vapors could rise through soil into buildings through basements and foundation cracks. The government partners have seen no evidence that the vapors are

getting into buildings at this time. The purpose of the study is to thoroughly investigate the situation and confirm that there is no immediate health concern.

VOCs are commonly used in industrial degreasers, metal cleaners and dry cleaning fluids. On a separate track from the environmental study, the agencies are working to identify possible sources of the ground water pollution.

The study will require permission from property owners for EPA to conduct air and soil-vapor sampling to see whether vapors are seeping into indoor air. Over the next few weeks, project teams will visit homes and buildings seeking access to collect samples. Those who attend the Dec. 13 and 15 meetings will be able to arrange for the sampling. There will be no cost to residents or businesses for the testing.

Some VOCs have no detectable odor at low levels. Breathing low levels of VOCs for long periods of time may increase some people's risk of health problems.

A map of the study area will be available later today at www.stlouispark.org. Residents and business owners with questions about the project may contact EPA Community Involvement Coordinator Cheryl Allen at 800-621-8431, Ext. 36196, weekdays 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., or allen.cheryl@epa.gov.

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