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TO: Residents of Port Barrington

FROM: Sarah Berg – Groundwater Protection Specialist
McHenry County Department of Health

DATE: December 21, 2007

The purpose of this memo is to update you on the activities that have taken place in response to the concern received by McHenry County Department of Health on November 27, 2007 regarding the presence of blue colored water in water wells in Riverwalk Subdivision. Since that time, staff from McHenry and Lake County Health Departments have collected water samples from numerous water wells located in and around River Walk Subdivision. Of 26 samples analyzed, 8 samples were positive for the presence of Acid Blue #9, a dye used to control aquatic plant growth in the retention ponds of Riverwalk Subdivision. Seven (7) of the positive samples were located in Phases 5 & 7 of Riverwalk Subdivision, and one (1) positive sample was located South of Riverwalk Subdivision. All eight (8) locations are in McHenry County.

Water samples were also analyzed for coliform bacteria, chlorides, nitrates and copper. All sample` results received to date have been found to be satisfactory for coliform bacteria, nitrates and copper. The chloride level in one (1) sample exceeded the recommended standard of 200 mg/l.

Flyers were hand delivered to residents of Riverwalk Subdivision and the surrounding area, asking residents to notify McHenry or Lake County Health Department of the potential presence of blue dye in their water. Four (4) additional samples have been collected for analysis; results are pending.

Water samples were collected from five (5) water wells, in which Acid Blue #9 was detected, on December 19, 2007. A full screen for synthetic organic compounds (SOCs) will be conducted on two (2) of the samples. Synthetic Organic Compounds include a variety of chemicals such as herbicides and pesticides. Three (3) samples will be analyzed specifically for endothall, a synthetic organic compound found in one of the herbicides used to treat the retention ponds. The samples will be analyzed by a certified, private laboratory, and it is anticipated that the results will be received in approximately three (3) weeks.

The current water sample results are available on the Department's webpage: www.mcdh.info. Copies of the Material Safety Data Sheets for the chemicals which were applied to the retention ponds are also provided.

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At this time, McHenry County Department of Health continues to advise all of the residents in Phases 5 & 7 of River Walk Subdivision and anyone who suspects blue dye in their water supply not to use their water for consumption by animals or humans. Bottled water can be utilized for drinking and cooking purposes. This is a precautionary measure; no illness or negative health effects have been associated with consumption of the water at this time.

The Illinois Department of Agriculture is currently reviewing the data regarding the application of the dye and herbicides to the retention ponds to determine if the chemicals were utilized within applicable regulations.

McHenry and Lake County Health Department staff continue to work with multiple other agencies, including the Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, and Illinois Geological and Water Surveys, in its investigation of this matter. Upon conclusion of the investigation, recommendations regarding long-term use of the private water supplies in Riverwalk Subdivision and surrounding area will be made. Should it be determined that remedial action is required, the matter will be referred to the appropriate agency for follow up and enforcement.

Additional information will be provided as it is received. Please continue to check the website for updates or contact McHenry County Department of Health at 815-334-4585.

Cc: Village of Port Barrington
Property Owner's Association
Lake County Health Department