

Insecticide traces found in some Nemo wells

Fewer than 30 residents may have been exposed

NEMO (AP) — Tests have found traces of insecticide in some water wells at Nemo, prompting the U.S. Forest Service to furnish bottled water to people in seven homes.

Other homes and businesses in the vicinity are being contacted, forest service officials said.

Fewer than 30 residents might have been exposed, according to the agency.

The discovery was part of a cleanup at some dumps at the

Forest Service Work Center at Nemo.

Seven of 10 wells located near the work center contained amounts greater than the 50 parts per trillion allowed by South Dakota water standards, the agency said.

Officials believe up to 250 5-gallon containers holding the chemical and diesel fuel mixture are buried in the dumps. The Forest Service and other agencies used the insecticide, ethylene dibromide, or EDB, to kill mountain pine beetles in the 1970s. EDB was banned 12 years ago after it was found to cause cancer in laboratory animals.

"EPA considers EDB a probable human carcinogen ... although there is no human data," said toxicologist Chris Weis of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Weis said he is not sure the levels are high enough to warrant abandoning the homes.

A company hired by the Forest Service plans to install filters in the homes' water systems, said Glen McNitt, a Forest Service spokesman.

Besides not drinking the water, residents at homes with higher concentrations should minimize exposure to breathing mists, such as during a shower, doing laundry or washing dishes, Weis said.

A Utah company has been hired to remove the chemicals from the dump sites. Contaminated material is to be hauled to a licensed out-of-state landfill.

Nearby Boxelder Creek showed no sign of contamination. Neither did the Boxelder Job Corps Center, four miles from Nemo.

The affected area is south of Boxelder Creek. The Forest Service has tested the wells for the Nemo Post Office and Nemo Fire Hall east of the center, and will test wells for adjacent landowners as a precaution, McNitt said.

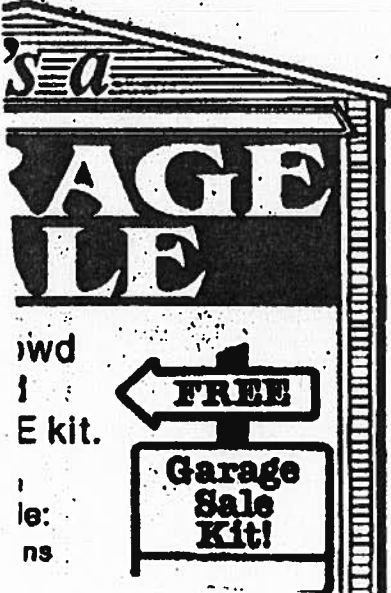
"We certainly are taking this seriously and dealing with it as quickly as possible. ... Forest Supervisor (John) Twiss is very concerned about the residents and our employees."

Nemo well tests ranged from 300 parts per trillion to 5,000 ppt at one well, according to McNitt.

*Aboudeen
American
News
10/19/96*

*Rec'd from
Bob Poappel
10/21/96*

Aboudeen, SO



*Att.
Bill
Schleining*