

Contaminated Drinking Water Discovered in Illinois – *United Press International* - April 21, 2009

Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn has ordered his staff to find out why residents of Crestwood weren't notified their drinking water was contaminated.

A Chicago Tribune report published Sunday said residents of the suburban Chicago community of about 11,250 people were exposed to cancer-causing chemicals from a contaminated well for years before the the state Environmental Protection Agency put a stop to it in 2007. The agency never notified residents they were at risk, the report said.

A 2005 law requires the state to issue a notification when residents could be exposed to soil or groundwater pollution but a loophole in the law says state environmental regulators are required to only notify municipal officials and not the residents, the newspaper said. The well water is reportedly polluted with vinyl chloride and perchloroethylene, believed to have come from a nearby dry cleaners.

Illinois EPA Director Doug Scott said Monday that "public's health never was at risk" because the well water was diluted with treated Lake Michigan water. The Tribune report, however, said the U.S. EPA has stated there is no safe level of exposure to the chemical.