

Exelon Nuclear Announces Details Of Bottled Water Distribution For Residences Near Braidwood Plant

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"We have no reason to believe any detectable tritium exists in those residence wells, nor do we suspect it," said Keith Polson, site vice president at Braidwood Generating Station "But at the same time, we want to ensure our neighbors' peace of mind until we can demonstrate it scientifically."

Under the testing and bottled water program, private wells at about 420 residences in Godley; within 1,500 feet of the discharge pipe; and within 1,500 feet of identified areas of elevated tritium will be tested or re-tested for tritium. A map of the area included in the program can viewed on-line at www.braidwoodtritium.info.

Those individuals on the Braidwood public water system will not tested or provided with bottled water.

Many of those wells have been tested recently at least once and shown to have no elevated levels of tritium.

The bottled water program is to start immediately. Each residence in the testing program will qualify for up to 20 gallons of water each week. The water will be available for pick-up at Berkot's grocery store in Braidwood. Eligible residents will receive official notification from Exelon by mail this week about the program and will be asked to show identification with address verification at the store.

Exelon has already conducted extensive testing of groundwater near the

Braidwood Station to determine the scope of tritium contamination. Company officials do not believe the new testing will show any additional contamination.

"We are happy to work with state officials to provide more data about the tritium issue," Polson said. "We know, through our extensive testing, that we have identified all of the groundwater locations affected by tritium.

"We also know this is an important issue for our neighbors, and we want to make sure that residents and local officials are confident in our data. We are happy to be able to fulfill our commitment to the residents of Godley and provide bottled water while this testing occurs."

Since extensive well testing began in late 2005, only one private drinking well near the Braidwood station was found to have detectable levels of tritium above background levels, or the amount of tritium that occurs naturally. The tritium level in that single well, which is north of the station, was well within safe drinking water standards established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The tritium contamination occurred after an underground pipe taking effluent away from the plant leaked on different occasions beginning in 1996, causing groundwater contamination on Braidwood station property and some adjacent properties. The pipe travels away from the plant to the north and east. Godley is south of the plant and is not near the underground pipe.

The bottled water program is only part of Exelon's commitment to help the residents of Godley deal with a long-standing problem with poor quality drinking water. Exelon also has publicly committed significant financial support to help Godley residents establish a new public water source. Details of that program are to be announced soon.

Last month, Exelon pledged to help pay for drinking water for Godley residents as a good-neighbor gesture during a public meeting called by Will County government officials. A county health official told residents at the meeting that if they are concerned about their water, they should drink and cook with bottled water instead, adding that the county would provide the water. Exelon is now taking on the full cost and management of the bottled water program.

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Contacts

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April 27, 2010 at 9:55 am CDT

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