

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 20, 2009

**Statement from Illinois EPA Director Doug Scott regarding the Crestwood Public Water Supply**

“In response to the calls with concerns about the ongoing situation with the Crestwood Public Drinking Water Supply, I want to reassure everyone that uses the Crestwood Public Drinking Water Supply that its drinking water is safe and that the public’s health was never at risk.

Illinois EPA’s concern is with an emergency backup water well, which was being used illegally to supplement the Lake Michigan water that Crestwood is required to use. The Illinois EPA believes that, from 1986 to 2007, Crestwood was using water from a contaminated groundwater well to supplement the Lake Michigan source water. Lake Michigan is tested frequently and documented as safe. We also believe that the volume of water from the contaminated well was quite low. It averaged only about 10 percent of Crestwood’s distribution, with highs of no more than 20 percent of the total public water distribution.

The problem with Crestwood was discovered when the Illinois EPA independently undertook a statewide initiative to test backup wells. Illinois EPA’s regional inspectors then identified the illegal use of the emergency backup well in its drinking water supply.

When the Illinois EPA discovered this illegal use, the inspector instructed the operator to cease immediately, and to begin the process of formally abandoning the well, precluding it from ever being used again as a source of drinking water. Crestwood is now getting 100 percent of its drinking water from Lake Michigan. We also cited the village for violations of the Safe Drinking Water Act. We cited it separately for knowingly providing false information about the source of its water to the Illinois EPA and to their water consumers. Those and additional enforcement actions are pending.

While the public drinking water supply is safe, anyone in the area that is getting their drinking water from a private well can contact the Illinois Department of Public Health at (630) 293-6800 for a list of private laboratories approved for testing. Once samples have been analyzed, residents can call the health department for an explanation of the test results.

We strongly believe in the public’s right to know about any environmental situation that could potentially be harmful to them and we are reviewing existing public notification and public information laws and policies to see if they can and should be strengthened.”

Doug Scott, Director  
Illinois EPA