



Janet Napolitano  
Governor

# ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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Stephen A. Owens  
Director

March 24, 2004

Dear Resident,

The purpose of this letter is to inform you about the recent discovery of groundwater contamination at the nearby Goodrich/Universal Propulsion Company facility and the steps being taken by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to address this issue.

As you may be aware, ADEQ sent a letter to the company in December, 2003, outlining assessment and cleanup actions required by ADEQ at the company's engineering and manufacturing facility. Among the actions required was additional monitoring to determine if groundwater had been impacted by known soil contamination at the facility. As a result, Goodrich installed two monitoring wells earlier this year.

Yesterday, officials from Goodrich informed ADEQ about the results of recent groundwater monitoring tests conducted at the facility, which revealed the presence of perchlorate contamination ranging from 43 to 130 parts per billion (ppb) in groundwater monitoring wells.

Arizona's Health-Based Guidance Level for perchlorate in drinking water is 14 ppb.

Perchlorate is a man-made inorganic salt used since the late 1940s as a component in solid rocket fuel, munitions and pyrotechnics. Perchlorate is soluble, mobile in ground and surface water, and it degrades very slowly in the environment. The UPCO facility manufactures ejection seat rocket motors, cartridge actuated devices and other explosive devices, many of which rely on perchlorate as their propellant.

Perchlorate, when ingested, can limit the uptake of iodide by the thyroid gland. Continual disruption of the thyroid gland can impede the ability of the gland to produce thyroid hormones that regulate metabolism and growth. Infants and pregnant women are particularly susceptible to the health effects that disruption of thyroid functions can cause.

While the general groundwater flow is away from nearby private wells, the complex local geology may provide pathways for groundwater to migrate in other directions. Although there is no evidence at this point to suggest drinking water wells in the area have been contaminated, ADEQ and the Arizona Department of Health Services are recommending as a precautionary measure that residents served by private drinking water wells along Yearling between 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 7<sup>th</sup> Street not drink or prepare food with tap water until such time as we have tested the water to ensure it is safe. However, according to ADHS, the water is safe for all other household uses,

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including showering and brushing teeth. Reverse osmosis water purification units effectively remove perchlorate from drinking water.

As a result of the discovery of groundwater contamination at the facility, ADEQ is requiring Goodrich/UPCO to take the following steps:

- Make bottled drinking water available to residents in the immediate vicinity of the facility who are potentially affected by the groundwater contamination until tests verify their wells have not been impacted.
- Move aggressively to characterize, assess and remediate the groundwater contamination.
- Reimburse ADEQ for costs associated with sampling neighboring wells.

ADEQ plans to begin sampling privately owned wells adjacent to the UPCO property today and expects to have test results as early as Thursday, March 24, 2004.

Additionally, ADEQ has offered to sample other wells in the vicinity of the Goodrich/UPCO facility. Residents interested in having their well sampled should contact Lowell Carty at (602) 771-4413.

I assure you that ADEQ will take all steps necessary to protect your health and area groundwater. If you have further questions or concerns about this issue, please contact the ADEQ Ombudsman, Brian Davidson at (602) 771-4881.

Sincerely,

Shannon Davis  
Director, ADEQ Waste Programs Division