



## Region 7

Iowa  
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## Fact Sheet

October 2010

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### Time-Critical Removal York Northeast Groundwater Superfund Site York, Nebraska

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#### INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7 is conducting immediate removal activities at the York Northeast Groundwater Superfund Site in York, Nebraska. The site is located in the northeast portion of York. The purpose of this removal is to eliminate human exposures to trichloroethylene (TCE) and other hazardous substances present in the groundwater. The exposure pathways are swallowing, breathing and touching.

#### BACKGROUND

Groundwater contamination has been an ongoing issue at the site since March 2009, when the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) discovered volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in some of York's **inactive** municipal water wells. In November 2009, NDEQ conducted a preliminary assessment and inspection at the properties. Samples were taken at private wells in the area of a contaminant plume. Results from the sampling indicated that three of the wells had TCE at levels above the Safe Drinking Water Act maximum contaminant level of five parts per billion, with one residence having a level of 53 parts per billion. Another well was contaminated with carbon tetrachloride.

#### THE CONTAMINATION

TCE is a nonflammable, colorless liquid with a somewhat sweet odor and a sweet, burning taste. It is used mainly as a solvent to remove grease from metal parts, but it is also frequently included in adhesives, paint removers, typewriter correction fluids, and spot removers.

Carbon tetrachloride is a manufactured chemical that does not occur naturally. It is a clear liquid with a sweet smell which can be detected at low levels. It is most often found in the air as a colorless gas. It was used in the production of refrigeration fluid and propellants, in aerosol cans, in fire extinguishers, in spot removers, and as a pesticide, a cleaning fluid, a degreasing agent.

#### TIME-CRITICAL REMOVAL

The objective of this time-critical removal action is to provide either permanent water connections to the York municipal water system, or whole-house treatment units, to residences or businesses whose water is contaminated at levels above EPA standards. These options will prevent human exposure from ingestion, inhalation or skin contact to the contaminants.

Currently, four residences are eligible to be connected to municipal water or receive a whole-house treatment unit. There are additional residences in the area which have not been sampled. If contamination is found in any of those wells above levels considered to be protective, those will also be eligible to be connected to city water or receive a whole-house treatment unit. It is not known how many wells may be affected by the contamination. EPA will determine how many wells are affected and provide assistance to residences or businesses that have been impacted.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact:

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