

Beachwood/Berkeley Wells

New Jersey

EPA ID#: NJD980654123

EPA REGION 2

Congressional District(s): 03

Ocean

Between the Garden State Parkway and Route 9

NPL LISTING HISTORY

Proposed Date: 12/1/1982

Final Date: 9/1/1983

Deletion Date: 1/6/1992

Site Description

The Beachwood/Berkeley Wells site lies in the New Jersey Pinelands area, which consists of reserved, protected, and preserved lands in Berkeley Township and Beachwood Borough. In 1982, a citizen's call prompted well water analyses that discovered lead in 20 percent of the Beachwood wells and 4 percent of the Berkeley wells sampled. As of 1982, County health officials closed 128 residential wells served by the Cohansey Aquifer due to excessive levels of lead. This aquifer is the major source of drinking water for area residents. The source of the contamination was unknown; however, it was suspected that naturally corrosive water was leaching lead from residential plumbing. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) immediately ordered Beachwood Borough to extend its public water supply to all homes within the Borough east of the Garden State Parkway and required all homes in that area to hook up to it. In 1986, the EPA studied Beachwood homes using public water and Berkeley homes using well water. The overall result of the investigation indicated that residential plumbing systems were the primary cause for lead contamination, with a minor contribution from the area's native groundwater. Beachwood Borough is densely populated and is located in a suburban setting. Berkeley Township is more rural and not densely populated.

Site Responsibility: This site was addressed through State and local actions.

Threat and Contaminants

Until the site was addressed through State and local actions, drinking water contaminated with lead was a health threat.

The site lies in the New Jersey Pinelands, a noted wildlife habitat and groundwater recharge area.

Cleanup Approach

This site was addressed in two stages: an emergency action and a long-term remedial phase focusing on cleanup of the entire site.

Response Action Status

Emergency Action: In 1982, the Ocean County Health Department closed private wells with elevated lead levels and provided bottled water for affected residents in Beachwood Borough and Berkeley Township.

Entire Site: The EPA attributed lead contamination at this site to corrosive groundwater acting on lead components in the plumbing systems and was unable to address the problem via the Superfund Program since the contamination was due to natural conditions. Thus, EPA recommended no further cleanup action and the State took over responsibility for the site. In 1982, NJDEP issued Beachwood Borough an Administrative Order requiring the extension of the public water supply system to all Borough homes east of the Garden State Parkway. In addition, the order required that all homes within the Borough be connected to the public water supply system. Construction of the water system expansion was completed in late 1983. The site was deleted from the NPL in January 1992.

Cleanup Progress

In 1982, the Ocean County Health Department closed private wells with elevated lead levels and provided bottled water for affected residents in Beachwood Borough and Berkeley Township.

In the June 30, 1988 Record of Decision, the EPA attributed lead contamination at this site to corrosive groundwater acting on lead components in the plumbing systems and recommended no further cleanup action. The State took over future responsibility for the site. State and local health officials continue to educate local homeowners on how to minimize the effects of lead in the drinking water. The site was deleted from the NPL in January 1992.

Site Repositories

USEPA Records Center 290 Broadway, 18th floor New York, NY 10007 (212) 637-4308