



For Immediate Release
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Remnants of the Elk River chemical spill not detected in Cincinnati area

Northern Kentucky Water District will open intakes today

Erlanger, KY – The Northern Kentucky Water District (District) received notice that a chemical release occurred on January 9, 2014 on the Elk River near Charleston, West Virginia approximately 265 miles from two of the District's water treatment plant intakes located on the Ohio River. The Elk River flows into the Kanawha River and then into the Ohio River in West Virginia. The District has been working closely with the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO), the State of Kentucky and the Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW) to track and respond to the Elk River spill.

Water samples have been taken at regular intervals along the Ohio River and at our drinking water intakes to help determine when the leading edge of the spill remnants would reach Cincinnati. Remnants of the spill reached our intakes Wednesday morning, January 15th and the District's intakes were closed prior to that time.

The Elk River spill was diluted as it made its way down the Ohio River so that much lower concentrations were detected here than in the West Virginia area. The District and GCWW detected Elk River Spill remnants, identified as 4-methylcyclohexane methanol, at levels between 10 and 30 parts per billion (ppb) in the raw Ohio River water. It is important to note that 30 ppb is equal to 0.03 parts per million (ppm). The CDC says the chemical is safe at levels below one ppm. What we detected in the raw Ohio River water was well below what the CDC considers safe. Over the last eight hours no remnants of the spill were detected and shortly after noon today the District will reopen its intakes.

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Northern Kentucky Water District (NKWD) serves approximately 81,000 customer accounts, or nearly 300,000 people in Campbell and Kenton Counties, portions of Boone, Grant and Pendleton Counties, and the Greater Cincinnati Northern Kentucky International Airport.



The District's state-of-the art treatment processes – powdered activated carbon in addition to granular activated carbon (GAC) – will serve as an additional protective treatment barrier. The District shut down its Ohio River intakes as a precautionary measure while the remnants of the spill passed.

“Maintaining the safety of our community’s drinking water is our highest priority,” said Ron Lovan, President & CEO of NKWD. “District staff has been working closely with numerous water professionals and agencies, and took the necessary precautionary measures to protect our drinking water supply and the public’s health and safety.”

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