

Village water remains safe

OZAUKEE

Press

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Officials from Freeman Chemical Corp. and the Village of Saukville are assuring residents that their drinking water is clean and meets the standards set by the department of natural resources (DNR).

Monthly and quarterly tests of the village water system have shown that the system "has never experienced any significant levels of contaminants," Village Administrator Kevin Brunner said. "The drinking water in the village from all village wells meets or exceeds all water quality standards set by the DNR."

The concerns were spurred by the placement of a number of waste dump sites on the Saukville Freeman Chemical Corp. property on a list of "high problem" dump sites in the state compiled by the DNR. A representative of the DNR has said the Freeman sites will be placed at the top of the priority listing, which is expected to be established this year.

Last week the DNR had identified two waste sites on the Freeman property, but this number was upgraded to three areas this week. Freeman Vice President and General Manager Charles Ross said the firm had identified each of these sites years ago and was working to clean them up.

Part of the problem, Ross said, lies in the fact that there were no regulations or standards about disposal sites until the 1970s. He said the firm is concerned about the sites.

"We intend to stay in Saukville for a long time, forever," Ross said, "so we are concerned about the environment there."

The DNR, as well as village officials,

have said they are satisfied with Freeman's clean-up efforts. The efforts, announced several years ago, are being financed jointly by Freeman and Waters Instruments Inc., the owners of Northern Signal Corp.

Northern Signal Corp. used to operate from a site near Freeman Chemical. They also used trichloroethylene in their operations, something Freeman does not do, and trichloroethylene is a contaminant found in the shallow ground water under and near the Freeman plant.

This water is not part of the drinking supply for the village.

The first three phases of Freeman's clean up plan are expected to be completed this spring, Ross said last year.

Freeman's disposal sites at the Saukville plant first came under scrutiny in 1979, when a number of complaints about an odor emanating from the drinking water were lodged with the village. The odor was determined to be coming from the village's well number two.

Only traces of various chemical compounds were found in the water from the well, and no organic chemicals were found in quantities large enough to qualify as contamination, Brunner said. As a precautionary measure, the village took well two out of service in 1979, and it is now used only in a closed cooling system at nearby Freeman Chemical.

Frequent monitoring of the well has shown no signs of pollution, Brunner said, and if the water is needed it could be pumped and used in the village's water supply.