

# Tracking the source

## DNR installing test wells to isolate contaminated groundwater

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**Grafton** — In an effort to track down the source of groundwater contamination that struck the Manchester Lane area in the town, the state Department of Natural Resources plans to install several groundwater monitoring wells at Lime Kiln Park.

Three wells will be installed with a flushmount well cover on flat concrete pads so they will not be a hazard for people walking or jogging in the park.

The wells will be used to collect soil and groundwater samples from the park area. The DNR should be finished with the testing by Sept. 30.

The state is looking at an old landfill in the park as a potential cause of the problem.

Traces of trichloroethylene (TCE), several breakdown products of TCE and vinyl chloride were found in six wells on the west end of the street.

An additional five wells in the area tested free of any contamination, but the DNR is still waiting for test results on 20 more wells.

Chad Czarkowski, a water specialist with the DNR,

said a dozen wells could be potentially affected in the area.

TCE is a heavy toxic liquid that is used as a solvent for oils and waxes.

The contamination was discovered after one resident on the street decided to have his well tested a year ago because his wife had breast cancer.

When chemicals were detected in the test results, he talked to a neighbor about installing a joint filtration system in their wells.

At that point the DNR was contacted.

The DNR has determined the groundwater flow runs from the northwest to the contaminated region.

In addition to the landfill, a half dozen smaller industries running along Wisconsin Avenue in Grafton and Tecumseh Power Products will also be tested.

Once the source is discovered, that identified party will be responsible for paying for any environmental studies and possible civil lawsuits filed.

The toxins detected are more of a threat to individuals over years of exposure, not within a short time frame, Czarkowski.

The toxins are not an immediate risk that will cause illness, Czarkowski pointed out.

The department does not know how the problem will be dealt with in the long run, but two options being eyed include placing a filter system in each well to remove the chemicals, or having the homes hookup to the Village of Grafton's municipal water system.