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Medical Testing on Black Leaf Residents Will Continue Into Next Week

By [ERICA PETERSON](#) (@PEOPLE/ERICA-PETERSON)

University of Louisville researchers say they're extending the window of opportunity for people living near the former Black Leaf Chemical plant to [sign up for medical tests](#).
<http://wfpl.org/post/researchers-hope-conduct-medical-tests-black-leaf-residents>



<http://media.publicbroadcasting.net/p/wfpl/files/black-leaf-150x150.jpg>

Credit Erica Peterson / WFPL
A sign on the fence surrounding the former Black Leaf Chemical site in Louisville's Park Hill neighborhood.

Earlier this year, Dr. Matthew Cave and Russ Barnett announced plans to seek funding to conduct medical tests on the plant's neighbors. The land under the former plant is contaminated with pesticides, heavy metals and other chemicals, and [last year soil testing revealed](#) <http://wfpl.org/post/epa-finds-contamination-all-homes-tested-near-black-leaf-site> that the contamination had spread to nearby yards. But what's not known is whether the high levels of toxins have affected the health of the people living in those homes.

Now, funds from Councilman David James' office and the Kentucky Institute for the Environment and Sustainable Development have come up with \$5,000. It's enough to test 100 people for lead and arsenic, but Cave wants to collect and store some samples, too. If other funding comes through, he wants to test people for pesticides and polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), too.

Lark Reynolds of the University of Louisville says so far, they've collected samples from 25-30 people. Initially, the tight timeframe was necessary because the EPA was scheduled to begin removing contaminated soil from the yards today, but that's been pushed back to next week. Ideally, the first set of samples is collected before the remediation; researchers also hope to test residents at intervals in the future, too.

Reynolds says researchers will definitely continue testing all this week and next Monday, and consider taking samples next week on a case-by-case basis. This testing will be conducted at 401 E. Chestnut Street. For more information, call 502-852-8928.

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