

<http://wfpl.org/post/epa-releases-results-soil-testing-black-leaf-chemical-site-neighbors>

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## EPA Releases Results of Soil Testing to Black Leaf Chemical Site Neighbors

BY [ERICA PETERSON](#)



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A sign on the fence surrounding the former Black Leaf Chemical site in Louisville's Park Hill neighborhood.

The [Environmental Protection Agency](#) has sent letters to homeowners in Louisville's Park Hill neighborhood who live near the former Black Leaf Chemical site and had [their soil tested earlier this year](#).

The [Black Leaf Chemical](#) site is a 29-acre parcel in the middle of Park Hill that was home to numerous pesticide manufacturing companies up until the 1970s. The EPA discovered soil contamination in 2010, and recently tested nearby yards to [see if the contamination had spread](#).

Now, at least [one highly-technical letter](#) sent to a resident (and posted by James Bruggers of the Courier-Journal) shows elevated levels of two carcinogens: arsenic and benzo(a)pyrene. Small amounts of dieldrin and lead were also detected. But because all the testing was on private property, the EPA has yet to release the data publicly or in one complete set. Carl Hilton is the executive director of the West Jefferson County Community Task Force. He's frustrated by the EPA's choice to release all the data piecemeal.

“I’ve been over and talked to some of the neighbors on St. Louis Avenue and they want to know the data too,” he said. “And I told them I would be a resource for the residents, because I know there’s going to be some technical data that they probably don’t quite understand.”

But he can’t help interpret the results unless he has the data.

Tom FitzGerald of the Kentucky Resources Council says the agency should have taken time to draft letters that inform residents of the results in plain English, instead of highly technical terms.

“Rather than kind of the technical ‘screening levels’ and ‘removal management levels’ and such, they need to let people know ‘here’s the level of contamination in your soil, here’s the concerns, if any, regarding public health,’”

In the letter, EPA on-scene coordinator Art Smith said the agency is prepared to hold a community meeting to discuss the data. An EPA spokesman confirmed that, but added that the agency wants to wait until negotiations with the site’s previous owners are finished. The agency can’t discuss the data publicly until all the homeowners are notified, but more information should be available next week.

Still unknown is whether some of the levels will be high enough to require the EPA to excavate and replace soil from yards adjoining the Black Leaf site.

TAGS:

[Black Leaf Chemical Plant](#)

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