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LOCAL

East Harris County residents told not to drink tap water

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HARRIS COUNTY, Texas - For years, those living near the San Jacinto River Waste Pits have been concerned about contaminated ground water, and this week some residents were notified that might be the case.

Harris County Public Health tested 100 residential wells as part of a voluntary 'water sampling project' and HCPH says 24 of the 100 households that participated in the project have now received letters telling them not to use their tap water.

The letter reads "early testing indicates higher than acceptable levels of dioxins in your well water."

However, the letter also stated there was a lab error, and said they would be re-testing the water, but until new results come in, HCPH told residents to use bottled water for drinking, cooking and for their pets.

According to the EPA, dioxins are cancer causing chemicals that have been found in the waste pits, as a result of paper mill waste that was dumped here decades ago.

It's something former resident Jackie Young has been keeping a close eye on, and she believes the letter speaks volumes.

“I wasn’t shocked by the letters, more so relieved, I felt like finally we are moving in the direction we need to move, and it cannot happen fast enough,” said Young.

HCPH said the second round of water samples was taken today, but tells KHOU 11 News those results won’t be ready for another 3 weeks.

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