

Elevated Radium Levels Found In SE Pa. Groundwater

HARRISBURG — A map showing areas of southeastern Pennsylvania where groundwater may contain elevated levels of radium has been released, Department of Environmental Resources officials said recently.

The potentially-affected area is in the Chickies Geologic Formation, a 112-square mile quartzite formation in portions of Bucks, Chester, Lancaster, Montgomery, York, Adams and Berks counties.

Elevated radium levels were found in three public water supplies which resulted in a co-sponsored study by the United States Geological Service and DER. That study began in October 1986. The USGS Water Resources Division, Malvern, found radium exceeded the 5-picocurie-per-liter maximum contaminant level established for public water supplies in 19 of 56 private drinking water supply wells.

Margaret Reilly, DER's chief of environmental radiation, explained that drinking two liters of water daily containing 5 picocuries per liter poses a risk of 0.7 to 3.1 cancer possibilities per million persons per year which may result in bone cancer. The body absorbs radium in much the same way as calcium and therefore, could lead to radium being deposited in bone.

Private water supplies are not regulated by DER. However, the Bureau of Community Environmental Control will explain the results of private testing that well owners may choose to have done.

L. Dewayne Cecil, USGS hydrogeologist said water from 130

additional wells will be tested as part of the continuing study.

For information on appropriate tests and commercial laboratories that accept samples from private wells, contact:

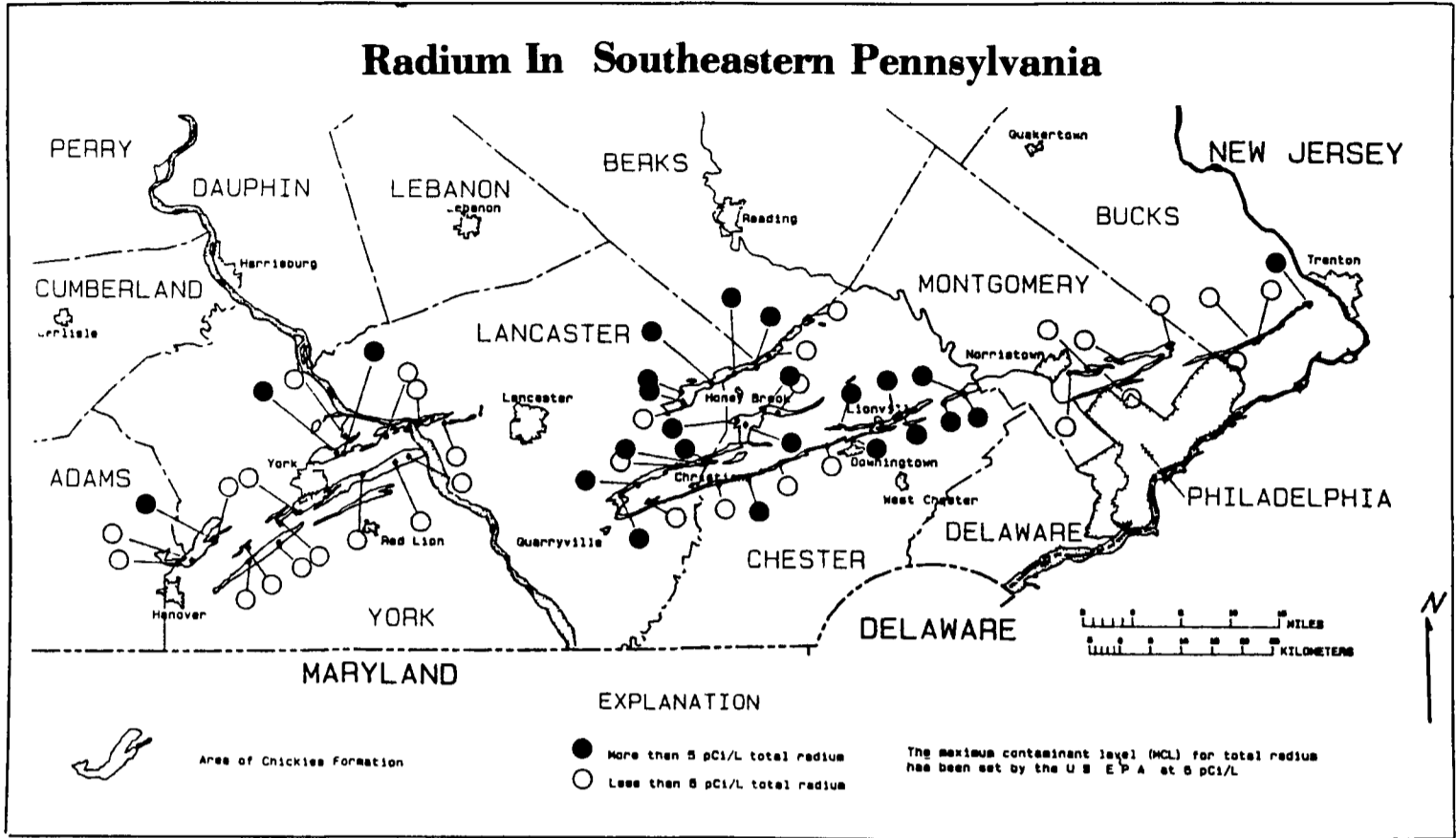
In Chester County:
Chester County Health Department

326 North Walnut Street
West Chester, Pa. 19380
(telephone (215) 431-6225)

In Bucks County:
Bucks County Department of Health
Neshaminy Manor Center
Doylestown, Pa. 18901
(telephone (215) 348-6000)

In Berks and Montgomery counties:
DER Norristown Regional Office
Bureau of Community Environmental Control
1875 New Hope Street
Norristown, Pa. 19401
(telephone (215) 270-1935)

In Lancaster, York and Adams counties:
DER Harrisburg Regional Office
Bureau of Community Environmental Control
One Ararat Blvd., Room 101-103
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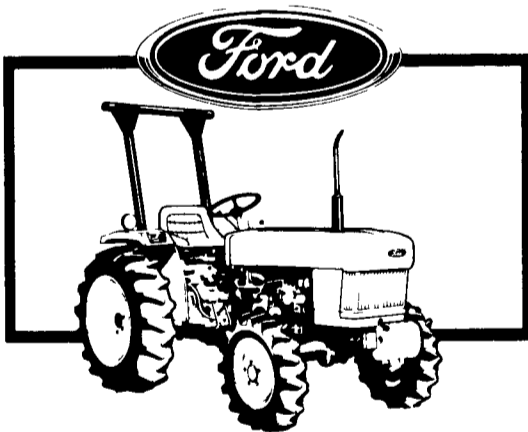
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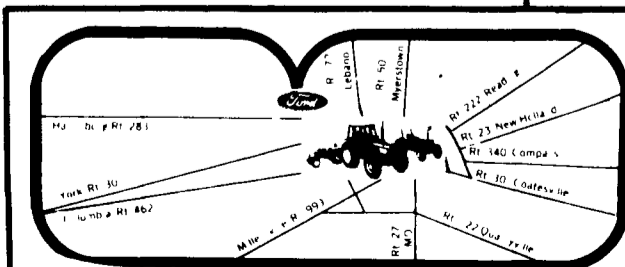
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