Message

From: Kaiser, Steven [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=10BF2440EDD749D2845015C7AB59FF4B-SKAISE02]
Sent: 8/21/2018 3:00:34 PM
To: McCoy, Lisa [LMcCoy@idem.IN.gov]; ADMIRE, BETH [BADMIRE@idem.IN.gov]; Carla Morgan [cmorgan@eastchicago.com]
CC: Zander, Rachel [Zander.Rachel@epa.gov]
Subject: USS Lead

Colleagues:

With Leo's departure, I will resume my practice of sharing press clippings with you.

All the best,

SPKaiser

East Chicago press clips
US EPA Region 5 – prepared by the Office of Public Affairs
August 21, 2018

US News **New Report Confirms East Chicago Lead Troubles**

https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/indiana/articles/2018-08-20/new-report-confirms-east-chicago-lead-troubles

New Report Confirms East Chicago Lead Troubles

Northwestern Indiana residents and environmental advocates say they're perplexed that a federal agency took two years to release its first report about blood-lead levels in children who live at a lead-tainted Superfund site.
Aug. 20, 2018, at 3:10 p.m.

AP

EAST CHICAGO, Ind. (AP) — Northwestern Indiana residents and environmental advocates say they're concerned that a federal agency took two years to release its first report about blood-lead levels in children who live at a lead-tainted Superfund site.

Many young children who lived at the USS Lead Superfund site from 2005 to 2015 were nearly three times more likely to be lead-poisoned compared with children living elsewhere in East Chicago, according to the report last week by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, a branch of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"It's disappointing," said Thomas Frank, an environmental activist and member of the Community Strategy Group. "This shows us nothing we didn't already know."

The report is the latest acknowledgement that officials repeatedly failed to protect residents in the low-income, predominantly black and Hispanic city, despite decades of warnings of pollution left by local abandoned factories. Families were forced to evacuate the West Calumet Housing Complex amid public outcry in 2016, five years after the site was designated for cleanup under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Superfund program.

"Nobody ever told us about the lead," said Akeeshea Daniels, who moved into the complex a month after her now-teenage son was born. "It's been two years since they forced us to move, and we still haven't gotten our questions answered."

Exposure to even low levels of lead can permanently damage a child's developing brain, affecting their IQ, ability to pay attention and academic achievement.

ATSDR first cited high blood-lead levels in children at the site in 1998. An updated 2011 public health assessment by the agency concluded that children could play safely in neighborhoods built on or near former industrial sites contaminated with lead.

The author of the 2011 report relied on city-wide data instead of specifically evaluating blood-lead levels for children living in the Superfund site, said Mark Johnson, regional director for ATSDR.

"These results reflect the harms that stem from environmental injustice," said Debbie Chizewer, an attorney with the Environmental Advocacy Center at Northwestern University's Bluhm Legal Center. "Government agencies at all levels all failed this community."

Francisco Arcaute
US EPA R5 press office
312 886 7613
Cell 312 898 2042