

Harris County

HCPHES

Public Health & Environmental Services

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June 3, 2005

****HEALTH ALERT****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services (HCPHES) is issuing a “Health Alert” for the area evacuated in response to the Louisiana Gas Development well blow-out. HCPHES has recently been informed that natural gas from the well blow-out may have traveled underground into nearby areas.

Remember, natural gas is odorless. As a safety precaution, most gas companies add a sulfur-like odor to natural gas to help people identify gas leaks. The gas that is being released from the well blow-out does not have an odor additive. **HCPHES strongly recommends that residents strictly adhere to the earlier evacuation order that was issued by on-scene responding agencies.**

POTENTIAL DANGERS – While the evacuation order is in place any source of ignition could pose a danger for explosion, including:

- Matches and lighters
- Cigarettes
- Pilot lights
- Car ignitions
- Other sources that may cause sparks (including small indoor sparks created by using light switches and telephones)

There is a possibility that water wells in the evacuated areas may have been contaminated by escaping gas. **Residents are strongly advised not to access any water from their wells, directly or indirectly, this includes through faucets or sprinklers.**

POTENTIAL DANGERS OF CONTAMINATED WATER WELLS:

- Explosion
- Exposure to chemical by-products

Even after the evacuation order has been lifted residents should not access well water until samples have been taken and analyzed by environmental professionals and recommendations regarding water safety have been provided.

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