

WASHINGTON – In response to a letter from U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will require the North Indian Bend Wash Participating Companies to “revise treatment plant operating procedures” after the agency failed to notify Scottsdale residents of potential contamination in the water supply until a month after the contamination took place.

“I am glad to see that the EPA takes this issue seriously enough to change policy for the future,” Mitchell said. “However, I remain deeply concerned that it took more than a month for Scottsdale residents to be notified, and the EPA needs to take steps to ensure this will never happen again.”

The East Valley Tribune reported that “many were outraged” by the EPA’s Nov. 15 announcement at a Community Involvement Group of the North Indian Bend Wash Superfund Site meeting “that water containing 9 parts per billion of TCE could have been introduced into the drinking water supply.” [Source: [East Valley Tribune](#) , Nov. 16, 2007]

An aide to Mitchell was also present at the meeting. The EPA’s announcement about the potential contamination was delivered as a postscript, after several decidedly less important matters had been discussed.

Mitchell wrote the EPA on Nov. 16 expressing his concern that “the public was not informed” that “that water from a Scottsdale Superfund site with nearly double the maximum legal limit of trichloroethylene (TCE), a suspected-cancer causing chemical, may have entered the city’s drinking water supply for a period of eight days.”

This week, in his response to Mitchell, EPA Regional Administrator Wayne Nastri wrote, “As for the future, EPA will require the NIBW PCs to revise treatment plant operating procedures to ensure the facility is operating effectively, and that EPA is promptly notified of potential sampling problems. We are also continuing to investigate the specific circumstances of this incident to determine whether further action under the EPA consent decree is warranted.”

Mitchell plans to meet with EPA officials to further discuss the issue.