

**R04-21, RECEIVED @ CLERK'S OFFICE 10/19/04**

**Clean Water - Illinois**  
**P.O. Box 268617 Chicago, Illinois 60626**  
**773/338-9825, FAX: 773/338-9859**  
**Cell: 312/315-6887**  
**E-Mail: dcdobmeyer@aol.com**

October 19, 2004

Chairman Phil Novak  
Illinois Pollution Control Board  
State of Illinois  
Suite 11-500  
100 W. Randolph  
Chicago, IL 60601

Dear Chairman Novak:

We are a diverse group of organizations that champion different environmental issues. However, our respective missions remain the same: to leave the environment better than we found it. In the interest of preserving the environmental landscape of Illinois, we would like to express our disappointment in the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's (IEPA) radium water quality standards proposal. As we understand it, the IEPA is proposing to allow unhealthy levels of radium in water for human consumption and a virtually unlimited amount of radium, a cancer causing agent, to be discharged into our rivers, streams and lakes.

The proposed rule change raises many serious concerns. Lowering the water quality standards would set a dangerous precedent as it would significantly weaken the state's regulatory process paving the way for polluters to act without concern. Allowing more radium would contribute to the already burgeoning pollution in the waterways which amplifies the threat to animal and plant life in our rivers, lakes and streams. Most importantly, relaxing state standards puts the residents of Illinois at risk of developing cancer and other serious diseases.

The citizens of Illinois deserve to know why the IEPA is aggressively pursuing a rule change that compromises environmental security and public health. This goes against all progressive environmental thinking and we have yet to hear of a compelling public interest rationale for weakening the standards that keep our waterways clean. We are calling on state leaders and policymakers to work in cooperation to uphold the current water quality regulations.

We respectfully request the board deny this rule change. Cleaning the drinking water by dirtying the rivers, streams and lakes is a short-sighted solution that will cause irreversible damage in the future.

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Sincerely,

Doug Dobmeyer  
Clean Water – Illinois  
773/338-9825

Nancy Wedow  
Conservation Chair  
Prairie Woods Audubon Society  
847/622-5321

Dave Lloyd, Volunteer Steward  
Des Plaines River Valley Restoration Project  
708/485-2296

Marilyn F. Campbell  
Executive Director  
Illinois Audubon Society  
217/446-5085

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