

## **Amendments to Radium Water Quality Standards Go to First Notice**

The Illinois Pollution Control Board, on July 8, 2004, sent to first notice a proposal which would amend radium water quality standards. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) filed the proposed rulemaking entitled Revisions To Radium Water Quality Standards: Proposed New 35 Ill. Adm. Code 302.307 and Amendments To 35 Ill. Adm. Code 302.207 and 302.525 on January 13, 2004. The proposal would change the general use and Lake Michigan water quality standards for radium from 1 picocurie per liter (pCi/L) to 5pCi/L and apply the proposed standards specifically to surface waters used for public and food processing water supplies. These changes make the water quality standards consistent with the federal finished water maximum contaminant level (MCL) and ensures the protection of surface water intakes for raw drinking water in the State. Radium is a naturally occurring radioactive metal that is commonly found in Illinois groundwater. The proposed changes are also expected to relieve a regulatory burden for many existing publicly owned treatment works (POTWs) that receive, treat, and discharge wastewater from public water supplies that remove radium from high radium groundwater.

The IEPA's proposal would eliminate the existing general use water quality standard for radium 226 at Section 302.207, but retain the standards for gross beta and strontium 90. The proposal would also establish a new public and food processing water supply standard of 5 pCi/L for combined radium 226 and 228 at Section 302.307 that corresponds to the federal finished drinking water MCL, which became effective December 8, 2003. The IEPA's proposal also deletes the radium 226 standard from the Lake Michigan basin water quality standards at Section 302.525. Since Lake Michigan is a public water supply for many Chicago area communities, the public supply intakes on and from Lake Michigan will be protected by the proposed public water supply standard for combined radium 226 and 228 at 5 pCi/L, but under the IEPA's proposal, there will be no separate radium standard for the Lake Michigan basin. The proposal retains the existing radioactivity standards for both gross beta and Strontium 90 for the Lake Michigan basin.

A 45-day period for public comments will begin following first-notice publication in the *Illinois Register*. The Board will also hold a hearing following publication.

Two public hearings have already been held. Transcripts are available on the Board's Website ([www.ipcb.state.il.us](http://www.ipcb.state.il.us)), or by writing the Clerk of the Board at the address below.

Written comments should contain the rulemaking title and docket number (R04-21) and should be sent to the Clerk's Office at the following address:

Dorothy Gunn, Clerk  
Illinois Pollution Control Board  
James R. Thompson Center  
100 West Randolph Street

Suite 11-500  
Chicago, Illinois 60601

For more information contact Amy Antonioli at (312) 814-3665 or email at [antonioa@ipcb.state.il.us](mailto:antonioa@ipcb.state.il.us)