



THE MEMPHIS DEPOT TENNESSEE

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD COVER SHEET

AR File Number 143

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MEMPHIS AND SHELBY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
814 Jefferson Avenue
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING OF RAY DEATON LAKE

The Memphis Defense Depot has conducted off-site testing of water, soils, subsoils and sediments, to determine background concentrations of various toxic chemicals in the community. This study is part of the clean-up process required due to contamination at the Depot's Dunn Field Superfund Site. The results from that testing have been provided to the Memphis and Shelby County Health Department. Based on these results, the Health Department ^{with the Memphis administration} has recommended to the Memphis Park Commission that additional testing be conducted for Ray Deaton Lake at Audubon Park. Until the new tests results are evaluated, the Health Department has also recommended that the existing city ordinance prohibiting fishing or other recreational activities that would involve contact with the lake water or sediments be strictly enforced at this location.

Specifically, the Health Department learned that the level of dioxin in two water and two sediment sample are above the level set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's latest risk evaluation guidance for dioxin.

The Health Department is recommending additional sampling and testing of water and sediment for several reasons:

- Contaminant levels for dioxin in water and sediment are measured at minuscule levels: parts per trillion and parts per billion respectively.
- The initial laboratory results for dioxin levels were estimates.
- Dioxin is a "heavy" pollutant that does not dissolve in water. Initial testing was of unfiltered water and so likely contained sediment that contributed to elevated readings in the water sampled.

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In addition to verifying the levels of these contaminants and in order to better assess the health risks to our community and make recommendations accordingly, the Health Department is interested in determining the source of the contamination. The Department will, therefore, sample the water production well that supplies the lake. It is unlikely that the well is the contaminant source, but it is felt that confirmation of this information is needed at the earliest opportunity. Results are expected in about four weeks after testing.

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