Water Quality Summary Report No. 33

1998 Follow-up Studies to Ground Water Contamination Detections

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Division of Environmental Quality
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Idaho Division of Environmental Quality
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1998 Follow-up Studies to Ground Water Contamination Detections

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ABSTRACT

The ground water studies were generally conducted within a one mile radius of the wells with a ground water contamination detection. If there were not enough wells available within the one mile radius, the study was expanded to include the nearest wells available. All of the sites are near wells that were sampled for the Statewide Ambient Ground Water Monitoring Program with results showing contaminants of concern. Only one Statewide Ambient Ground Water Monitoring Program well, in Mountain Home, was sampled during the 1998 Follow-up Ground Water Studies. It was requested by Idaho Department of Water Resources that the Statewide Ambient Ground Water Monitoring Program wells not be included in the studies, unless absolutely necessary.

Three of the nitrate study areas were localized problems. The nitrate and arsenic in the West Caldwell area will need additional samples collected in a larger area to identify the cause of the impacts. The arsenic found in the ground water near the Snake River in Canyon and Owyhee Counties was too pervasive to be a localized problem (see Figures 5, 6, 7 and 8 on pages 11, 12, 13, and 14; respectively). The arsenic along the Snake River and the fluoride in the Idaho Batholith appear to be naturally occurring. Additional work is needed to understand the scope of this problem and to help the well owners understand their ground water quality.

INTRODUCTION

The Ground Water Protection Act of 1989 formed the Ground Water Quality Council to develop a Ground Water Quality Plan for Idaho (Ground Water Quality Council, 1992). The Idaho Ground Water Quality Plan of 1992 is a planning document to manage protection of ground water quality, prevention of ground water contamination and remediation of contaminated ground water. It establishes the basis for continuing efforts to protect ground water now, and for future generations.

The policy of the state of Idaho, as stated in the Idaho Ground Water Quality Plan, is to implement and maintain a monitoring program designed to investigate ground water quality in regional and local areas where contamination may have occurred. The Ground Water Monitoring Technical Committee, which is composed of numerous agencies, was formed to identify and prioritize where ground water contamination was found. This report documents the regional follow-up ground water studies in fifteen “Priority One” areas as identified by the Ground Water Monitoring Technical Committee for the Division of Environmental Quality, Boise Regional Office (DEQ-BRO).