



DEC NEWS RELEASE

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

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Fuel found floating on groundwater under former Sterling Zipmart Precautionary testing of area drinking water taking place

In a recent inspection of a former gas station in Sterling, the Sterling Zipmart, gasoline was found floating on groundwater. This facility passed a routine state inspection for leaking tanks two years ago and was found to be leak free. The store was closed last year and this inspection was being conducted for final closure purposes. Samples taken from the former Zipmart drinking water well showed no signs of fuel contamination.

Drinking water samples from the Sterling Elementary School's well collected December 6, 2001 showed no fuel contamination. As a result, DEC is not recommending that the school stop using its drinking water. Samples were collected again on January 16, 2002 and the results will be available in about 10 days.

As a precautionary measure DEC has asked the nearby Sterling Baptist Church, Sterling Lutheran Church, laundromat and a private residence not to drink their tap water until precautionary sample results are available. Their wells were also tested on January 16th.

For more information contact Paul Horwath, 262-5210, ext. 250 or Jim Frechione at 269-7658.