

# NEWS RELEASE



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## **Illinois Officials Responding to Hazardous Materials Spill in Hamel**

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and Illinois Department of Public Health are working cooperatively with the Madison County Health Department and Village of Hamel, Illinois to provide residents with information following a hazardous materials spill in the community.

On Tuesday, June 11, 2019, at approximately 10:55 a.m., a semi-truck transporting Electric Arc Furnace Dust was involved in an incident at the intersection of West State and Hamel Ave. in Hamel, Illinois. As a result, contents from the trailer were released into the air and onto the ground. The product released was waste from steelmaking or smelting that contains heavy metals. The responsible party has hired an environmental contractor to remediate the area. The contractor is collecting the nearby food stand and its contents for disposal. The contractor is also collecting samples from several locations in the community to be analyzed for heavy metals.

Individuals who were in the area when the release occurred, or later that evening, may have been exposed to the product. Exposure could lead to eye, nose, or throat irritation and coughing, particularly for people with existing respiratory conditions like asthma. Some components of the product may irritate the skin in addition to mucous membranes. Ingestion of the dust can occur if people do not wash their hands before eating, or by ingesting food, such as garden vegetables, that have been impacted by dust.

Individuals who were directly exposed to the dust as a result of the incident should be seen by a health care provider. For all others, general recommendations for reducing exposure to metals in dust include washing your car, replacing cabin air filters, wiping down the interior of vehicles with a wet cloth, and removing your clothes before you enter your home if you were in the area of the spill and affected by the dust. Garden vegetables in the area should be washed before eating and outdoor children's play sets and toys in the area should also be washed.

The area of the spill is being evaluated to determine the extent of the spill and remediation will continue until the area is deemed clear by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

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