



Department of Health  
Agency of Human Services



## Tritium detected for first time at Connecticut River shoreline

**For immediate release: August 17, 2011**

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BURLINGTON – Tritium has been detected for the first time in water taken at the shoreline of the Connecticut River. The Vermont Department of Health Laboratory today confirmed that samples of water taken on July 18 and July 25 from the river at the point where contaminated groundwater flows from the shoreline into the river measured 534 and 611 picocuries per liter, just above the lower limit of detection.

“We have been tracking the plume of tritium-contaminated groundwater as it moves slowly toward the river, and this new finding confirms that the tritium has traveled from the Yankee site to the Connecticut River,” said Health Commissioner Harry Chen, MD.

In addition, the Health Department reported earlier this month that Strontium-90 was detected in edible portions of fish taken nine miles upstream of Vermont Yankee on June 9, 2010. Today the Health Department received lab results that confirmed the accuracy of that finding.

Gov. Peter Shumlin wrote plant officials on Aug. 3 calling for an increase in the number of extraction wells to prevent contamination from the nuclear facility from reaching the river or groundwater supplies. In addition, he instructed the Health Department to begin obtaining weekly samples of water from the Connecticut River at the shoreline and other locations in the river, which the department has begun.

The Health Department will continue to test more fish and water samples as part of its comprehensive surveillance and reporting on Vermont Yankee.

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