



Data request re radiation monitoring reports

Schultz, Doug (MDH) <Doug.Schultz@[REDACTED]>
To: "info@publicrecordmedia.com" <info@publicrecordmedia.com>

Tue, May 13, 2014 at 5:23 PM

Dear Mr. Ehling,

I'm writing to follow up on your data practices request regarding environmental monitoring reports for radiation in MN, as contained in the attached letters.

As you may know, we have Environmental Monitoring Reports on our website from 2012 going back to 2007. You can see these at:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/radiation/monitor/>

The 2013 report will likely be published in the fall of 2014.

I'm checking to see whether we have this same form of report in hard copy archived somewhere offline going back to 2004, as someone in a previous string of emails had indicated. I should know something on that tomorrow.

It is my understanding that we do not have such reports prior to 2004 (and possibly not prior to 2007 – again we're checking on that) and so that data would have to come from our Public Health Laboratory (PHL). Staff in the laboratory had some questions about your request that need to be answered so that we can provide the data you seek in the most beneficial format.

1. PHL has raw radiation data in electronic form from 1992 until 2004 and beyond in a PHL database. They have been working with IT to export this data out of the system and put it in a format that you could import into your database or website. This data is raw laboratory testing data and it will be difficult for a user of your website to reconstruct or understand what the data means outside of the MDH database and the context of a report.
2. While the environmental health web page mentions data records going back to 1953, no one currently working at MDH seems to know in what form those early records existed or exactly where they are (so we're considering changing that reference on the website). PHL has paper records of raw radiation data in the MDH archive that might go back that far. It would need to be called back, and scanned or copied. This processing would have a cost associated with it. (Or, you could inspect the data on the premises w/o cost).
3. Exporting the electronic data from a couple of different systems would be our preferred way to deliver the data you requested. Before PHL can complete the export of the data from the database, they need to know:
 - a. What formats for electronic data would be acceptable or preferred, keeping in mind there may be a cost associated for producing some data formats?
 - b. Is the request limited to radiochemistry data resulting from the power plant sampling program ("environmental monitoring program), i.e. air, surface water, well water, community water, milk, TLD and precipitation from around the plants? MDH also conducts some radiochemistry analysis as part of the Drinking Water Protection program: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/com/ioc.html> A summary of those results can be found in the annual Safe Drinking Water Act reports.

Our sincere apologies for the delay in responding to your request.

Doug Schultz



Communications

Minnesota Department of Health

625 N. Robert St.

P.O. Box 64975

St. Paul, MN 55164-0975


doug.schultz@



Ehling Data Practices Request 5-6.pdf
577K



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Matt Ehling <info@publicrecordmedia.com>

Wed, May 14, 2014 at 11:08 AM

To: "Schultz, Doug (MDH)" <Doug.Schultz@ [REDACTED]>

Dear Mr. Schultz,

Thank you for your response, and for the work your agency is putting in to fulfilling this request. Here are answers to the questions you posed in your e-mail:

1. In regard to the cost associated with the production of older, paper records, I would first like to inspect the records that exist, in order to gauge the approximate copying costs. I understand that there will be search costs associated with the production of any volume of copies as well, and I am willing to incur such costs. I intend to copy as much data as possible to make it publicly available on our web site, but I will make a final determination on copies after inspection.

2. In regard to the compilation and electronic production of raw radiation data from 1992-2004, an Excel spreadsheet format would be workable, if that is easy to produce on your end.

If possible, it would be helpful to batch the data by location, as is done in your environmental monitoring reports:

http://publicrecordmedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/documents/MNGDPAMDH2011_pd_010.pdf

This way, it will be easier for a lay audience to compare values across standard locations, over time.

I am interested in obtaining both radiochemistry from power plant sampling, as well as the radiochemistry of drinking water as sampled by the Drinking Water Protection program. My intention is to gather data in order to evaluate changes in environmental radiation related to power plants over their lifetime, as well as to gauge changes that may be attributable to historical above ground testing (which I believe is the purpose of the drinking water sampling.) If my assumption are off about whether the requested data will correlate to such things, please let me know before compiling.

As there will be some costs associated with compiling and organizing the electronic data, please provide me with a cost estimate before undertaking the work, so that I can prepare for those costs, and discuss any questions I might have about them.

Please let me know if I can clarify any other portion of this request.

Sincerely,

Matt Ehling
Public Record Media

[Quoted text hidden]