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LATEST NEWS

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HEAVY METAL CONTAMINATION PART I

We have obtained advice from a university environmental scientist about the four dust sample results which show the presence of lead, arsenic, mercury, cadmium and chromium at four homes in Beeliar.

His advice is as follows:

"As you are aware the major concern is usually inhalation of these heavy metals which are damaging to health at high concentrations. Dust accumulating on surfaces is a potential health risk, especially if children contaminate their hands with the dust and then ingest it with food etc. However the development of standards to protect health is difficult for this exposure method due to enormous variations between individuals due to behavioural differences." e.g. young children might play in the dust and inhale or swallow it while a prudent adult might clean up the dust wearing a full face mask and gloves.

The scientist provided data from published research which shows how Beeliar dust compares with cities in China including one very heavily polluted city, Shijiazhaung. Mercury and arsenic were not recorded.

Place (sample numbers)	Cadmium (mg/kg)	Chromium (mg/kg)	Lead (mg/kg)
north of CCL factory (1)	< 0.5	38	14
northeast of CCL factory (1)	< 0.5	43	-
east northeast of CCL factory (1)	< 0.5	59	-
≈ east CCL factory (1)	-	65	-
Heibe natural soil	0.09	68	21
east northeast of CCL factory (1)	-	-	26
≈ east CCL factory (1)	-	-	52
Chengdu dust	2.1	143	114
Beijing dust	2.3	86	168
Shijiazhaung			
1. office/education area (3)	1.9	160	136
2. miscellaneous areas (11)	2	125	128
3. commercial area (4)	2.1	127	180
3. dense traffic area (8)	2.7	143	229
4. industrial area (16)	3.6	143	173
northeast of CCL factory	-	-	190
≈ east CCL factory (1)	6	-	-
5. railway station (1)	6.1	280	470