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roundwater in Southwestern Illinois

In May 2014, Wei Zheng, along with collaborators Walt Kelly (Illinois State Water Survey), Steve Taylor (Illinois Natural History Survey), and Sam Panno (Illinois State Geological Survey), received a one-year grant for a project titled "Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products (PPCPs) in Karst Groundwater in Southwestern Illinois," allowed them to continue their work on groundwater contamination in karst regions of the state and expand to look at veterinary hormones.

Groundwater in karst regions frequently contains contaminants and, in previous studies by the researchers on this project, high levels of fecal coliform bacteria have been detected in karst regions of Illinois. Effluent from septic systems is the likely source of this bacterial pollution and may also be contributing to PPCPs (Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products) being released into the karst groundwater; however, PPCP and hormone contamination has not been previously examined in southwestern Illinois.



In karst environments, manure-contaminated water can runoff from animal feed lots into caves and contaminate the groundwater.

Therefore, this project is systematically sampling springs and caves for PPCPs and other water quality parameters in the Sinkhole Plain of southwestern Illinois, looking at seasonal variations and sewage discharge effects and relationships among various chemical and bacterial parameters. On a broader level, the scientists involved are interested in expanding the Prairie Research Institute's research capabilities with respect to analysis of PPCPs in water samples and understanding the environmental fate of PPCPs and their effects on aquatic biota.

Funding was provided by the Prairie Research Institute's Matching Research Awards Program.



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Uptake, Translocation, and Accumulation of Pharmaceutical and Hormone Contaminants in Vegetables

Fate of Pharmaceutical and Personal Care Products in Irrigated Wastewater Effluent

Karst Groundwater Contaminants in Western Illinois

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Occurrence and Removal of Pharmaceutical and Hormone Contaminants in Rural Wastewater Treatment Lagoons

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Nano-CarboScavengers

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2008 PPCPs Symposium

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2016 PPCPs in the Environment Conference

2017 Emerging Contaminants in the Aquatic Environment Conference

2018 Emerging Contaminants in the Aquatic Environment Conference

2019 Emerging Contaminants in the Environment Conference

2016 Teacher Workshop on Pharmaceutical and Personal Care Products in the Environment

PPCPs Videos

Emerging Contaminants Consortium

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