

Miscellaneous; Outbreak Of Cryptosporidiosis, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, United States

Lloyd's Information Casualty Report

Milwaukee, Wis., Oct 18 - A new study says human sewage may be the source of the 1993 cryptosporidiosis epidemic in Milwaukee that sickened more than 403,000 people and contributed to the deaths of more than 100. The Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel says the source of the Cryptosporidium that contaminated the city's water supply was never identified, but cattle had been the prime suspects.

Ben Beard a parasitic disease expert with the US. Centres for Disease Control, says new studies now suggests that human waste in city water drawn from Lake Michigan was the source of the outbreak in March and April 1993. He calls it the largest waterborne epidemic in the nation's history. Cryptosporidium is an intestinal parasite found in most surface water supplies. Chlorine doesn't kill it; it must be filtered out during water treatment.

Cryptosporidiosis can become chronic, and even fatal, in people with compromised immune systems. Within a year of the epidemic, more than 100 people, mostly AIDS and cancer patients, had died after becoming infected the illness. The city has taken steps to guard against a future outbreak, making \$74.5 million in improvements to the two water plants. They include new filters, monitors and an ozone disinfection system. The city is also moving the Texas Ave. water intake pipe nearly a mile farther into Lake Michigan and away from polluted water flowing from the Milwaukee River. - United Press International.

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