

State seeks NDK data on pollution from blast

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BELVIDERE — Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Director Doug Scott has asked the Illinois attorney general's office to force NDK Crystal to disclose what chemicals from its Belvidere plant may have polluted the soil, air and water after a Dec. 7 explosion at the Crystal Parkway facility.

The company, which manufactures synthetic quartz crystals for computers, phones, liquid crystal displays and other electronics, could face a lawsuit from the attorney general's office if it does not comply.

Approximately 800 to 850 gallons of sodium hydroxide solution, as well as quartz crystals, were released into the atmosphere during the explosion, according to a news release issued Wednesday by Scott's office. Wastewater containing process chemicals also may have been discharged through the facility's floor drains. Such pollutants ultimately seep into nearby water sources via surface runoff.

The Illinois EPA requests that NDK be required, among other things, to conduct a thorough analysis of the cause of the explosion and release a written report of those findings and recommendations for corrective or preventive actions to minimize the potential for another similar incident. The state EPA is also asking that NDK provide the agency with detailed diagrams of the locations of the floor drains at its facility and a description of what process chemicals may have entered water sources via surface runoff.

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