

Tests show canals free of contamination

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Waterways into which chicken carcasses were dumped during the peak of the bird flu scare are free of viral contamination, Apichai Chvajarernpun, chief of the Pollution Control Department, said yesterday.

Water samplings were taken from rivers and canals in 12 provinces where the dumping of fowl carcasses was reported.

The results cleared eight provinces

— Suphan Buri, Kanchanaburi, Nakhon Pathom, Nonthaburi, Sing Buri, Phitsanulok, Uttaradit and Bangkok — of viral contamination.

Results for four other provinces: Sukhothai, Kamphaeng Phet, Phichit and Uthai Thani, have yet to come.

Mr Apichai expected these findings to be negative as well, saying the virus was unlikely to survive in the open environment, compared to animal hosts.

The department plans to conduct a test on underground water sources in

areas close to poultry burial pits, to check for possible contamination.

Mr Apichai said villagers complaining of foul smell from the pits should fill up the holes with more soil and place pipes under it to allow the stench to be released more quickly and dissipate.

Villagers in tambon Phangtru of Kanchanaburi's Phanom Thuan district have complained that the area has been hit by hydrogen sulfide (rotten egg gas) leaking from a pit where 30,000 chickens were buried.