

Q: At the November CAG meeting, I learned that your contractor has not been filtering the decontamination water at the vermiculite mine. What are you going to do about this breach of protocol?

A: During the regularly scheduled meeting week in November, EPA announced at the TAG meeting, the Lincoln County Commissioner's Briefing, and at the CAG meeting that we had discovered our contractor has not been using filters on the hose used to decontaminate vehicles leaving the Mine site.

We considered this a serious breach of the standard operating procedures specifically stated in our workplan, so we issued a formal "CURE Notice" giving the contractor ten days to rectify the situation, which they did. A CURE Notice is a significant reprimand and could lead to the termination of a contract for default. The Notice remains a part of the contractor's permanent record at the Site. If any citizen or worker knows of other infractions by our contractors, please let us know and we will take further action.

As EPA reviews the past construction season, we have noted enough minor deviations from our restoration specifications and safety protocols that we have decided to bring in an outside agency to audit our construction practices. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been engaged to conduct a "Value Engineering Assessment" of our removal and restoration activities to ensure that all aspects of our workplan are adhered to in the future.

If you have any information you'd like to share with us, please contact Ted Linnert at 303-312-6119 [toll free from Montana: 1-800-227-8917 x6119] or linnert.ted@epa.com . Ted's regular mail address is:

Ted Linnert
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 8 – 80C
1595 Wynkoop Street
Denver, CO 80202-1129