

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



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**GOLD KING MINE STAKEHOLDERS ALERT AND NOTIFICATION PLAN**

**INCIDENT COMMAND GOLD KING (ICGK)  
7 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

 _____ Incident Commander, Chris Ruhl (R6)	 _____ Date
 _____ Deputy Incident Commander, David Ostrander (R8)	 _____ Date
 _____ Deputy Incident Commander, Peter Guria (R9)	 _____ Date





**Incident:** EPA Response to Gold King Mine Release Incident  
**Subject:** Gold King Mine Stakeholders Alert and Notification Plan

**Strategic Objectives:**

1. Notify stakeholders throughout the entire watershed in Regions 8, 6 and 9 of any mine related activities that could potentially impact the watershed.
2. Intended to address the first level of notification and information sharing.

**INTRODUCTION**

The Gold King Mine Stakeholders Alert and Notification Plan will notify stakeholders throughout the entire watershed in Regions 8, 6 and 9 of any mine related activities that could potentially impact the watershed. The Plan also includes a “notification only” alert for non-mine related activities such as a rainfall event. The Plan in its current form will remain in effect as long as work is ongoing at the GKM site. The Plan is intended to address the first level of notification and information sharing. Beyond this initial notification, all parties are responsible for assessing the incident and determining additional needs for response and notification.

**Planning Scenario:** This Plan is not intended to take the place of emergency action plans, spill plans, normal reporting requirements or action necessary for life safety events.

The framework of this Plan is based on the assumption that existing flows in the Animas River will affect timing and dilution. At a measured flow of 1000cfs at the USGS gauging station on the Animas River below Silverton, a spill or runoff event will likely take approximately the times listed below for each reach of river.

1. 30 minutes: Mine Operations to Silverton City limits
2. 30 minutes: Silverton to entrance of Animas River canyon
3. 10 hours: Animas River Canyon to Bakers Bridge
4. 10 hours: Baker’s Bridge to Northern Durango city limits
5. 6 hours: Northern Durango City Limits to Southern Ute Reservation Boundary
6. 12 hours: Southern Ute Reservation Boundary to NM State Line

**ALERT LEVELS**

***Notification Only***

- An identified non mine-site related event affecting Cement Creek or the Animas River that will not pose a physical or safety concern for downstream users, but may be perceived as a negative event by stakeholders, public, or the media.
- This could include a precipitation event causing discoloration of Cement Creek unrelated to mine operations, a storm event that may cause identifiable disturbance of sediment, or any other event that could cause limited discoloration of the Animas River.



**Alert I**

- An identified event at the mine site that is unlikely to cause any physical or safety concern, but may be negatively perceived by the public for impacts beyond Cement Creek.
- This could include a limited or temporary release of treated or untreated mine wastewater that may be identifiable through operator knowledge or observation or direct measurements of turbidity, or pH in mine waste discharge, that could occur anywhere above the USGS Gauging Stations before Silverton.
- This could also include identification of a storm event affecting mine site operations or causing significant runoff leading to discoloration through two or more reaches of the Animas River identified above.

**Alert II**

- An identified event that may have limited negative public perception for downstream users for physical and environmental effects.
- This could include a failure of treatment systems or storm event causing a shutdown of operations.
- This could include a surge of mine waste that overcomes current capabilities for a short period.
- This could include a major storm event that would mobilize sediment from several drainages and large amounts of mine waste sediment from the Animas River causing widespread identifiable turbidity and discoloration.

**Alert III**

- This will include all events that are or will likely cause large-scale environmental or physical safety effects.
- This will include events such as terrorism or an extreme vandalism event shutting down operations.
- This will include additional or imminent mine dump failures, catastrophic slope failure or similar event.

**NOTIFICATION PROTOCOL**

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**Notification Only**

- On-site OSC to notify EPA ICP in Durango within 1 hour of identified event.
- EPA IC to determine need to log in daily Situation Report (SITREP).
- EPA ICP to E-mail stakeholder list (attached) by end of day.



**Alert I**

- On-site OSC to notify EPA ICP within 1 hour of identified event. Durango IC and Command Staff to be notified within 1 hour of EPA ICP notification.
- This event will be logged in daily SITREP.
- EPA ICP to E-mail to stakeholder list within one hour of EPA ICP notification.
- Stakeholder agencies should be notified by end of day or following morning if event occurs after 6PM.
- EPA ICP to hold strategy meeting and determine need for downstream monitoring or sampling.

**Alert II**

- On-site OSC to notify EPA ICP as soon as practical. Durango IC and Command Staff should be notified within 1 hour of EPA ICP notification.
- On-site OSC should attempt immediate phone contact with SJC EM or Sheriff. If unable, contact should be requested through radio link to CSP Montrose Dispatch Center.
- This event will be logged in daily SITREP.
- EPA IC to send E-mail to stakeholder list immediately upon EPA ICP notification.
- Stakeholder agencies should be verbally noticed within one hour of event. Only one contact per agency is necessary.
- EPA ICP to hold strategy meeting to determine downstream monitoring and/or sampling needs and activation of the JIC.

**Alert III**

- On-site OSC to notify EPA ICP as soon as practical. Durango IC and Command Staff should be notified immediately upon ICP notification.
- On-site OSC should attempt immediate phone contact with SJC EM or Sheriff. If unable, contact should be requested through radio link to CSP Montrose Dispatch Center.
- EPA IC should make notification to the National Response Center (800) 424-8802
- On-site OSC and EPA ICP should establish real-time communication.
- This event will be logged in daily SITREP.
- EPA IC to E-mail stakeholder list immediately upon EPA ICP notification.
- Stakeholder agencies should be verbally notified by EPA ICP as soon as practical. Only one contact per agency is necessary.
- EPA ICP to hold strategy meeting to determine downstream monitoring and/or sampling needs and activation of the JIC.
- EPA IC to schedule stakeholder briefing as soon as practical.