



Understanding EPA's Residential Cleanup Process in Libby and Troy



The cleanup of Libby Amphibole (LA) asbestos contamination from residential properties in Libby and Troy, Montana is a detailed process that may require multiple visits to a property. This flyer summarizes EPA and DEQ investigation and removal activities and intends to help guide homeowners through this process. If you have questions, please contact your Community Involvement Coordinator (CIC) or call the **EPA Information Center (293-6194)** for Libby and Troy residents.

Property Visits and Meetings

EPA and DEQ understand that property visits and meetings can be disruptive to residents, so we want to keep them to a minimum. Below is a list of steps that may be required prior to a removal activity at your property. Each of the visits listed below has a specific purpose in the overall cleanup process. All are scheduled in advance with residents and we do our best to honor these appointments. We appreciate your patience with this process.

1. Voluntary Recruitment Program (VRP)

The VRP team will be the first to contact you if your property still requires investigation. They will ask for your permission to conduct the investigation activities and for you to sign a consent for access form. If you are aware of any vermiculite on your property, please tell your VRP contact.

2. Screening Investigation (SI)

In the early 2000s, EPA inspected many properties in Libby for vermiculite and LA asbestos as part of the Contaminant Screening Study (CSS).

The SI has replaced the CSS. Similar to CSS, SI data is used to place homes into three categories: cleanup is required, cleanup is not required, and additional information is needed.

If cleanup is not required, your property will not move any further in the process at this time. If cleanup is required or additional information is needed, a property/land survey will be conducted in support of a Detailed Investigation (DI).

3. Property/Land Survey

A property survey is needed for all properties where a DI is required. The survey is conducted by a licensed/registered land surveyor*. The information collected is used for future investigation activities and to create a final cleanup design.

Your presence at your property is not required for the survey, but is always welcome!

*Although conducted by a licensed surveyor, this survey is not a legal document.

4. Detailed Investigation

The DI will collect information that may be used to plan the cleanup and to prepare the Removal and Restoration Agreement for the property if EPA determines that your property requires a cleanup.

SI and DI visits typically include, but are not limited to, the inspection of:

- **Attics:** Identify attic access points and location and volume of vermiculite (if present), take photos and prepare drawings of the space.
- **Interiors:** Visual inspection for vermiculite in the home and other structures on your property, take photos and prepare physical descriptions (e.g., number of floors).
- **Exteriors:** Sample collection and visual inspection to determine where vermiculite or Libby Amphibole (LA)-impacted soil is present, take photos and measurements, and prepare drawings of the inspected areas.

The interior component of an SI or DI may be performed during winter months before the exterior component. *SI and DI visits may require your attendance to access the interior of structures for inspection.*

5. Preparatory Removal Evaluation (PRE)

If it is determined that a cleanup is required at your property, you will be contacted by your CIC to schedule a PRE. Representatives from the removal contractor will visit your property to view the site and to evaluate the property for cleanup. The results of this meeting will be communicated to you during the Removal and Restoration Meeting.

This visit may require your attendance if an interior cleanup is necessary at your property.

6. Removal and Restoration Meeting

The CIC meets with the homeowner/resident in their home, at the EPA Information Center in Libby, or at the DEQ Information Center in Troy to discuss:

- Cleanup work to be done (homeowner/resident signs the Removal and Restoration Agreement)
- Relocation options during the cleanup
- Reimbursement for food and lodging
- Pets, keys, and other special concerns

This meeting will require your attendance.

Removal and Restoration Steps

Although each property is different, there are some steps that are followed for removal and restoration of all properties.

Attics

There are six basic steps in removing LA asbestos contaminated vermiculite from attics:

1. **Mobilization.** Equipment is taken to the site, including barrier fencing, decontamination equipment, negative air units with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters, and plastic sheeting to seal windows and doors.
2. **Bulk Removal.** A large vacuum trailer and sealed blue box are used to remove vermiculite. Material is vacuumed from the removal space to the box using the vacuum pressure generated by the HEPA-filtered vacuum trailer. The vermiculite waste is properly disposed of at the landfill.
3. **Detailing.** After bulk removal is complete, the area is “detailed” to remove any remaining small pockets of vermiculite. Detailing uses the smaller hoses from the vacuum trailer and box.
4. **Visual Inspection.** A visual inspection is done when detailing is complete. Cleaning continues until there are no visual signs of remaining vermiculite in the area.
5. **Encapsulant Application.** An encapsulant may be applied to the interior of the cleanup area to seal any fibers in place that could not be removed during cleanup.
6. **Confirmation Sampling.** Aggressive air sampling is conducted to confirm the area meets EPA’s current cleanup standards. Sampling is called “aggressive” because electric leaf-blowers are used to stir the air during sampling.

Restoration

Restoration activities follow the cleanup. Activities inside buildings may include replacing insulation and repairing access holes or incidental damage. Outside activities can include filling excavated areas with clean soil and vegetating the disturbed areas with hydroseed, replacement plants, etc.

EPA realizes that restoration is very important to property owners. We continually work to improve our restoration methods and materials. *Ask your CIC to show you EPA’s outdoor restoration demonstration plots.*

Following restoration there will be periodic visits to your property to monitor restoration success.

Air Monitoring

EPA takes safety seriously. Air monitoring on asbestos cleanup workers and at the perimeter of excavation areas is performed throughout the cleanup process. “Best Management Practices” (e.g., wetting of materials, use of negative air pressure, encapsulation) are followed at all times to minimize the potential for asbestos fibers to become airborne.

**If you encounter any vermiculite left in place after your cleanup,
call the Lincoln County Asbestos Resource Program (ARP) at 406-291-5335.
If you have any feedback on this flyer or process, please contact the EPA Information Center.**

Interior Living Space

Cleanup of non-bulk, residual asbestos or vermiculite in the interior residential living space involves five basic steps:

1. **Mobilization.** Similar to that used for attics.
2. **Cleaning.** If necessary, vacuums equipped with HEPA filters and moist cloths are used to clean all horizontal surfaces. Carpets are vacuumed. No closets or drawers are opened, except to inspect for fallen vermiculite. In most homes, items are cleaned in place.
3. **Sealing.** Areas identified as potential sources of leaking may be sealed with caulk, expanding foam, or other material to prevent future leaks.
4. **Visual Inspection.** A visual inspection is conducted when cleaning is complete. Cleaning continues until the area is visually clear of vermiculite.
5. **Clearance Sampling.** Aggressive air sampling is conducted to confirm the area meets EPA’s current cleanup standards.

Exteriors

Outdoor cleanup of yards, gardens, and driveways, etc. includes four basic steps:

1. **Mobilization.** Large equipment (e.g., water tanks, earth moving machinery) will be mobilized to the site. This may be done a couple days before cleanup begins.
2. **Bulk Removal.** Various pieces of equipment ranging from shovels to backhoes are used to remove the soil containing the vermiculite and/or asbestos. Soil is kept moist by watering to minimize the potential for asbestos fibers to become airborne.
3. **Visual Inspection.** A visual inspection is conducted when excavation is complete. Generally, excavation will continue if high amounts of vermiculite are observed.
4. **Confirmation Sampling.** Soil samples are collected to confirm the area meets EPA’s current cleanup standards.