



Annual Project Update Libby Asbestos Superfund Site

EPA Information Center • 108 E. 9th Street • Libby, MT 59923 • 406-293-6194

May 2014

Introduction

Since 1999, significant cleanup progress has been made at the Libby Asbestos Superfund site. The site is located in northwest Montana and includes the towns of Libby and Troy, as well as the inactive vermiculite mine seven miles northeast of Libby. In 2013, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) completed the 14th year addressing properties contaminated by Libby amphibole (LA) asbestos in Libby and Troy. This fact sheet provides an update on site activities and provides a snapshot of what to expect during the remainder of 2014.

2014 Construction Changes

The 2014 construction season began in May and EPA anticipates removals at close to 70 properties this year. Beginning in 2014, EPA is mobilizing to properties even if the only contamination is asbestos just above trace levels. All soil with asbestos concentrations above “trace” (0.2 percent) will be removed. Upon completion of removal action, the majority of every property will have no detectable levels of asbestos in soil. We have also changed our approach regarding vermiculite. Vermiculite can be an indicator of asbestos—but doesn’t necessarily mean that asbestos is present. We are relying on lab analysis to determine whether vermiculite contains asbestos and needs to be removed. EPA’s goal has been and continues to be reducing exposures to asbestos. If you have questions about these modifications, please contact the EPA Information Center in Libby at 406-293-6194.

Former Vermiculite Mine Area (Operable Unit 3)

EPA and W.R. Grace are developing a long-term water management plan to improve water quality in the Rainy Creek watershed which feeds into the Kootenai River. The goals of the plan are to reduce concentrations of asbestos in waterways within the Rainy Creek watershed and to enhance the existing tailing impoundment dam. EPA will engage with all stakeholders including the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Lincoln County Conservation District, Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, W.R. Grace, community members, and MDEQ during the development of options to implement this plan.

Mark Your Calendars

EPA will host two open house events to update the community on site-wide activities:

Troy Open House

5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 10
at the Troy Senior Center, 304 3rd Avenue

Libby Open House

5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday, June 12
at the Libby Riverfront Park

(in case of bad weather, the event will be moved to the Libby School Administration Building)

Questions?

Contact Jennifer Lane, 800-227-8917, ext. 312-6813



Lincoln County Asbestos Resource Program Hotline

ARP Hotline – 406-291-5335

Are you planning to remodel, demolish or excavate? Call the Asbestos Resource Program (ARP) as soon as you begin planning a project. Lincoln County’s ARP will evaluate the situation to determine if there is LA asbestos present. Remember that you could still come into contact with asbestos on your property, including inside of your home, even if it was previously investigated or addressed by EPA.



Risk Assessment

EPA expects to finalize toxicity values for LA asbestos late in 2014. These toxicity values will support development of the site-wide human health risk assessment and guide EPA’s future actions in Libby. This effort has and continues to involve intensive scientific and public review, including an independent review by the Science Advisory Board. In the interim, EPA continues to address exposures with our removal program.

Work Completed in 2013

- Completed more than 100 removals consisting of 34,000 cubic yards of soil.
- Completed investigations at more than 700 properties.
- Celebrated Riverfront Park and the cleanup and redevelopment of the former export plant.
- Closed the Troy MDEQ office to streamline operations from the Libby office.
- Conducted surveys to receive feedback on our customer service and removal actions.



2014 Work Planned

For the remainder of the 2014 construction season EPA plans the following work:

- Complete removals at about 70 residential properties.
- Complete investigations at about 600 properties.
- Finalize the ecological risk assessment.
- Complete the five-year review.
- Finalize the LA asbestos toxicity values to support completion of the site-wide human health risk assessment.
- Develop a feasibility study that will identify final cleanup options and help lead to selection of a final remedy.

January to June 2014 Work Completed

- Finalized the long-term site investigation for five of the eight operable units.
- Completed activity-based sampling as part of the site investigation. This included analysis of more than 3,100 samples to provide data on human activities and exposures.
- Continued to support the City-County Board of Health with implementation of the ARP. The program provides community-wide resources to reduce exposure to asbestos.
- EPA and W.R. Grace hosted an April open house to discuss long-term water quality work planned at the former vermiculite mine.
- Initiated a five-year review to ensure that work completed at the former export plant and former screening plant continues to protect human health and the environment.

Contacts

If you have questions about the Libby site or vermiculite or asbestos on your property, we encourage you to contact the Libby Information Center at 406-293-6194. You may also contact one of the following team members:

- **Rebecca Thomas.** EPA Libby Team Leader, 800-227-8917, ext. 312-6552
- **Jennifer Lane.** EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, 800-227-8917, ext. 312-6813
- **Mike Cirian.** EPA On-site Project Manager, 406-293-6194
- **Lisa DeWitt.** MDEQ Project Officer, 406-841-5037
- **Carolyn Rutland.** MDEQ Project Officer, 406-841-5040
- **Lincoln County ARP.** 406-291-5335



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