



# Sampling and Cleanup Update

EPA Information Center \* 501 Mineral Avenue, Libby, MT 59923 \*  
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Fact Sheet Number 9

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## Sampling Statistics

- 3454 properties were inspected for visible vermiculite
- EPA collected soil samples from 3029 properties (samples weren't required for every property)
- 281 owners denied access to the samplers
- 1067 structures have visible vermiculite outside but no visible vermiculite inside
- 216 structures have visible vermiculite inside but no visible vermiculite outside
- 320 structures have both indoor and outdoor vermiculite
- 40 secondary structures (e.g sheds, detached garages) have vermiculite

EPA collected about 15,000 soil samples from more than 3000 properties over the last year. These samples will be used, along with the survey and inspection information, to determine which properties will require cleanup, which will require more investigation, and which will not require cleanup. EPA, USGS and others have developed and continue to test new, more accurate, and less costly techniques for measuring Libby asbestos in soil. Until the most sensitive and accurate analytical techniques are available, EPA will delay analysis of the soil samples. As soon as the new techniques are officially approved, EPA will use them to make cleanup decisions on each property and will begin to notify property owners of their status.

## Cleanup Statistics

- 8 residential/commercial properties were completed prior to 2002
- 17 residential/commercial properties were completed in 2002
  
- Average cost per cleanup over all properties including 2001: about \$100,000
- Average cost per cleanup in 2002: about \$150,000
- Average cost for last seven cleanups of 2002: about \$50,000
  
- In order to get work started without excessive delay, EPA used emergency response contracting mechanisms for the residential/commercial cleanups in 2002. These are designed for flexibility. EPA has made the transition from the Superfund Emergency Response Program to the Superfund Remedial Program. The Remedial Program is geared toward long-term response actions such as Libby requires. Libby's EPA team expects to continue to improve the efficiencies while still meeting the primary goal: protecting Libby citizens' health.
  
- For the first several properties, EPA tried a variety of approaches for sampling, worker protection, and cleanup in order to learn what worked best. The costs of some of these first residential cleanups were higher than we estimated, however, we expect that what we have learned from these first residential cleanups will help us to more efficiently conduct future cleanups. Several of these cleanups were complex and are not generally representative of "typical" residential/commercial Libby cleanups.

**EPA is working to refine its residential cleanup work and expects that these refinements will continue to lower costs and increase the speed of cleanup**

## **EPA Fact Sheet: Sampling and Cleanup Update**

EPA began a program of residential/commercial cleanup in Libby during 2002. Seventeen property cleanups were completed in 2002. EPA is using the information gained from the first residential cleanups to refine future contracting and residential cleanup plans. These refinements will bring more efficiency to the entire process through better contracting and a streamlined cleanup plan. While the refinements won't all be immediate, EPA is confident that the cost and rate of cleanup will improve. EPA also completed a systematic screening and sampling of all properties in the Libby area, the first step in determining which properties will require cleanup and which will not. Please look inside for more detailed information.

EPA will continue to report on progress and costs as the cleanup moves forward.

**For more information, please feel free to visit or call the EPA Information Center.  
501 Mineral Avenue in Libby 406-293-6194**

**Or call EPA staff toll free :**



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