



Annual Sampling and Cleanup Update

EPA Information Center
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Fact Sheet Number 13

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Cleanup Update

EPA's progress in 2005 far exceeded our expectations, having cleaned up 225 properties (for a project total of 578). As EPA and its contractors become more experienced with the technologies we are using in Libby, the cleanup is becoming more cost-effective and efficient every year.

The Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study

The next major project milestone is the completion of the Remedial Investigation (RI), which determines the nature and extent of Libby amphibole (LA) asbestos contamination and assesses the associated risks. It is EPA's goal to obtain a level of certainty that will ensure a reasonable decision on what the final cleanup strategy will be for Libby.

The RI began with the Contaminant Screening Study (CSS), which included an unprecedented 3,500 sampling events. After this data was interpreted, the CSS revealed some data gaps, which were addressed in the second phase of the RI. The RI report will present an analysis of all data collected at the Libby Asbestos Site. Along with the Baseline Risk Assessment (BRA), it will present estimates of risk to human health and the environment. It is also the basis for the analysis of cleanup alternatives that will be conducted in the Feasibility Study (FS).

The FS, a companion document to the RI, is a step-by-step process used to identify and evaluate cleanup processes, technologies, and alternatives at Superfund sites. It uses RI data to determine the need for (and scope of) clean up and presents an analysis of how risks identified in the RI can be reduced.

At Libby, the FS process is aided by the fact that so many cleanups have already been done, providing important, first-hand data for evaluation of future cleanup alternatives. Cleanup is not usually done at sites until after the RI/FS and Record of Decision (ROD) are issued. However, immediate health risks at

Libby warranted that cleanup begin while the RI/FS was being conducted.

This work was done as part of a *time critical removal action*. EPA chose to reduce risks immediately by removing major source areas of LA and by beginning residential and commercial cleanups as part of the removal action.

The next step in the FS is to develop a complete list of cleanup alternatives for evaluation. This is made easier in Libby because the technologies and process options for dealing with asbestos are fairly limited. There really are only a few things EPA can do to clean up Libby – most of which are related to physically removing or isolating the LA.

Another important component of the RI is a series of technical memos that document studies that EPA undertook to address data gaps in the scientific community's knowledge of Libby amphibole asbestos. In many instances, these studies have resulted in cutting-edge advances in the science of asbestos measurement and analysis.

EPA is committed to writing a "user-friendly" RI/FS that will promote a partnership with the community. These reports will help residents understand how cleanup decisions are made. EPA expects to complete the RI/FS later this year.

The Proposed Plan

The potential cleanup alternatives are then evaluated using specific FS criteria, such as protectiveness or effectiveness. Alternatives that pass this evaluation are then systematically compared against one another to determine relative strengths and weaknesses. This comparative analysis produces a *preferred alternative* for cleanup that is described in detail in the Proposed Plan, which will be available for public comment. The end result of the RI/FS process is a preferred alternative for cleanup in which EPA and the community can be confident.

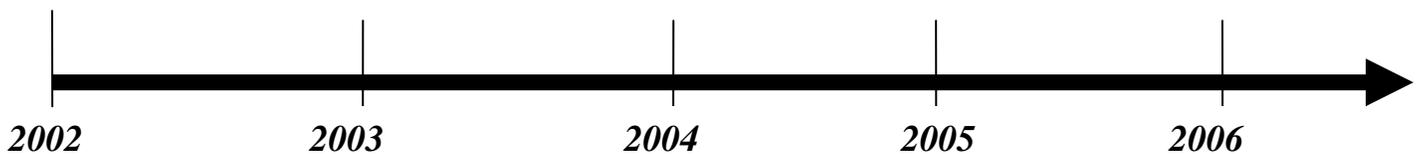
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Libby Project Timeline – 2002 to 2006

- | <u>2002</u> | <u>2003</u> | <u>2004</u> | <u>2005</u> | <u>2006</u> |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most cleanup of WR Grace facilities, schools, and public areas completed• EPA announces decision to clean residential properties including vermiculite insulation• Libby added to Superfund list• 3000+ properties inspected and sampled during the CSS• 26 residential cleanups completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1200+ properties inspected or sampled• EPA publishes interim cleanup standards and protocols• 157 residential or commercial cleanups completed• City boat ramp cleanup completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 170 residential or commercial cleanups completed• EPA announces it will include Troy in the cleanup• Cleanup of BNSF rail yard completed• Cleanup of Flyway property completed• New cleanup | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 225 residential or commercial cleanups completed• Special sampling to verify protectiveness of cleanup• Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study underway• Begin initial coordination for 2006 Troy investigations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 225 residential or commercial cleanups scheduled to be completed• Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study due this year• Proposed Plan identifying preferred cleanup alternative being developed• Begin Troy investigations |



Questions? Please visit or call the EPA Information Center, at 501 Mineral Avenue in Libby (406-293-6194), or call the following EPA staff toll free:

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