



Annual Project Update

Libby Asbestos Superfund Site

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Introduction

The Libby Asbestos Superfund site is located in northwest Montana and includes the towns of Libby and Troy, as well as an inactive vermiculite mine seven miles northeast of Libby. In 2012, the EPA and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) completed the 14th year addressing Libby Amphibole (LA) asbestos and vermiculite contaminated properties in Libby and Troy. This fact sheet provides an update of 2012 activities, what's planned for the rest of 2013, and other EPA site-specific information that may be of interest to the community.

2012 Work Completed

For the 2012 construction season, the EPA and MDEQ completed work at 174 residential and commercial properties resulting in the removal of 74,400 cubic yards of impacted soil. This brings the total number of removal actions to 1,777 properties and over 1 million cubic yards of impacted soil removed and replaced.

2013 Work Planned

For the 2013 construction season the EPA plans to continue with the neighborhood approach and execute the following work:

- Complete removal and restoration of at least 85 properties in Libby and Troy
- Provide community support by excavating soils from a portion of the kid's fishing pond located in OU5 (the former Stimson complex)
- Assist in the removal of a portion of the soils from the site where the new St John's hospital is being constructed
- Conduct partial demolition of the old Glacier bank affected by vermiculite building materials

The EPA will continue to provide the community with updates on activities as more information becomes available.



Completion of Riverfront Park

In May 2010, the EPA issued a Record of Decision for Operable Unit (OU)1 (the former Export Plant and now the location of Riverfront Park). The construction at Riverfront Park began in 2011 and was completed in August 2012. A total of 25,656 cubic yards of contaminated soil was removed and disposed at the former vermiculite mine. Following excavation, a visible

marker layer, indicating the extent of removal, was placed at the bottom of the excavation. The excavation was backfilled with clean material. The park now serves as a place for community gatherings and celebrations.

Toxicity Values/SAB Update

The Libby community requested that the risk assessment and cleanup decisions for the Libby site be based on LA-specific toxicity data. The EPA conducted a scientific review and released draft LA-specific toxicity values to the public in 2011, followed by a 60-day public comment period.



A Science Advisory Board (SAB) panel was then formed to review the draft toxicity assessment and public comments. The SAB released their final review report on the draft toxicity assessment on January 30, 2013. The EPA is currently incorporating SAB and public comments and preparing a revised LA-specific toxicity assessment report. For a more detailed presentation of the timeline and the review process, please visit the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) website: cfpub.epa.gov/ncea/iris_drafts/recordisplay.cfm?deid=235092.

Nature and Extent Sampling

Previous investigations conducted at the site have demonstrated that LA is present in environmental source media (examples: soil, tree bark, duff or forest floor material) at locations in and around the mine. In order to better understand the extent of LA contamination in forested areas outside the mine vicinity, the EPA conducted a study to characterize LA contamination in forested areas within the Libby valley in 2012.

In addition to the nature and extent characterization studies, extensive surface water and sediment sampling has been conducted in the Rainy Creek watershed as part of the Operable Unit 3 (OU3) remedial investigation sampling programs. As part of the OU3 investigation, Kootenai River surface water samples were collected in 2012 under high and low flow conditions. Sediment samples were also collected under low flow conditions. Sampling results will be shared with the community as they become available.

Institutional Controls (Long-Term Plan)

The Libby City and Lincoln County Board of Health is working with the EPA to establish institutional controls (ICs) to reduce LA exposures over the long-term and protect the final remedy. ICs are administrative and legal tools that do not involve

construction or other engineered controls. They help ensure that contamination is managed appropriately whenever it is encountered. An example of an IC is the existing utility location service, known as U-Dig. A call to U-Dig, by the excavating contractor or homeowner, prompts the EPA to provide information regarding the potential to encounter LA asbestos contamination and offers assistance in managing contaminated soil and/or building material. ICs could also include establishing Best Management Practices (BMPs) for performing certain activities that could disturb soil or building materials possibly contaminated with LA.

Lincoln County Asbestos Resource Program

The Lincoln County Asbestos Resource Program's (ARP's) mission is to reduce exposure to asbestos community-wide through a combination of education, providing resources, and administering local health regulations. The ARP can be contacted at 406-283-2462.



The ARP operates under direct guidance of the City-County Board of Health for Lincoln County, and works closely with the EPA to develop and implement a program that reduces the risk of exposure to asbestos for people living, working, and recreating in the community. In December 2012, the City-County Board of Health released a document for public review that defines the proposed program framework (education, resources, and initiatives) and strategies for ARP development, implementation, and evaluation. The document can be viewed at www.lincolncountymt.us/environmentalhealth/Asbestos.html.

Environmental Resource Specialist

It is possible that you might unexpectedly find vermiculite while digging in your yard, when performing remodeling work on your home, or as part of your job. If you do find

vermiculite, the EPA strongly recommends you do not disturb it further and to contact the Environmental Resource Specialist (ERS). You may also call the ERS if you suspect vermiculite, even if you are unsure that what you see is vermiculite. If the ERS determines that there is vermiculite on your property that needs to be addressed, the situation will be evaluated and recommendations will be made which can range from advice, to best management practices, to full removal. If a removal is necessary, there will be no cost to you.



- ERS for the Libby area – 406-291-5335
- ERS for the Troy area – 406-291-0272

Libby Legacy

Congratulations to the Libby Legacy Project for their success in voluntarily developing a series of 90-minute lectures/sessions to educate teachers, students, and the community at large about the history and the legacy of mining asbestos-contaminated vermiculite. A series of nine very informative lectures sessions were finalized in fall 2012 and can be viewed at www.youtube.com/user/libbylegacyproject.

In addition to this series, the Libby Legacy Project developed a timeline of events associated with vermiculite mining in Libby. This timeline is on the Libby Public School website and can be viewed at www.libbyschools.org/sites/default/files/page-files/LLP_112612_Condensed.pdf.

Contacts

If you have questions or concerns, please visit the EPA Information Center at 108 E. 9th Street in Libby, or call 406-293-6194. You may also contact one of the following EPA team members:

- Rebecca Thomas, Libby Team Leader, 800-227-8917, ext. 6552
- Mike Cirian, On-Site Project Manager, 406-293-6194
- John Podolinsky, MDEQ Project Manager, 406-841-5040
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