

What to Know About the EPA's Proposed Plan for Addressing Lead in Residential Soils

On June 1, 2026, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a Proposed Plan for changes to the existing cleanup level for lead in residential soils and interior dust at the Butte Priority Soils Operable Unit (BPSOU) of the Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area Superfund Site. We encourage interested residents to read the Proposed Plan and attend the public meeting (06/16). The Butte community and all interested stakeholders are also invited to submit written comments during the 30-day public comment period, which will run through June 30, 2026.

Butte Priority Soils Operable Unit, Butte, MT

June 2026

Existing BPSOU Boundary and Proposed Modification

Existing BPSOU Boundary	Proposed BPSOU Modification
4,265 acres	3,637 additional acres
4,700 households	7,100 additional households



1:42,000
0 1,500 3,000 Feet

Red outline: BPSOU Boundary
Purple outline: 2026 Proposed BPSOU Boundary Expansion

Proposed Changes

1 Lower Cleanup Level for Lead in Residential Soils and interior dust

The EPA proposes to lower the BPSOU-specific cleanup level for lead in residential soils and interior dust from 1,200 mg/kg (which is equivalent to parts per million) to 456 mg/kg.

2 Expand the BPSOU Boundary

The EPA proposes to expand the current BPSOU boundary to incorporate densely populated residential neighborhoods impacted by historic mining operations in Butte. Properties within the expanded BPSOU boundary (see map) will need to be sampled and evaluated for contamination to determine if remedial action is necessary.

3 Update the Timeline for Cleanup

The EPA expects that sampling, evaluation, and necessary remedial action will take a total of 15 years from 2026. Sampling, evaluation, and any necessary remedial action will prioritize the most vulnerable populations.

Residential Metals Abatement Program

Would you like your residential property sampled? The Residential Metals Abatement Program (RMAP) provides free environmental assessment services, including sampling of residential yards and interior dust for lead, arsenic, and mercury, as well as interior and exterior paint and pipes for lead, if necessary. Make an appointment by contacting the RMAP:

RMAP | City and County of Butte-Silver Bow | (406) 497-5040
www.co.silverbow.mt.us/467/22584/Residential-Metals-Abatement-Program

Would you like to have your blood tested?

Free blood-lead testing is offered for every resident in the city-county of Butte-Silver Bow through the Butte-Silver Bow Health Department. To make an appointment, please reach out to Kayla Harvey, R.N., Butte-Silver Bow's Environmental Health Nurse: 406-497-5003

Protecting the Most Vulnerable

Cleanup decisions for residential land use are based on those most sensitive to the harmful effects of lead exposure (young children under 6 years old).



Get the Details

- **Read the plan.** The Proposed Plan is online at www.epa.gov/butte. Instructions on how to comment (in person at the public meeting or in writing) are given in the Proposed Plan.
- **Attend the public meeting.** See below for where and when.
- **Reach out.** Contact Mackenzie Meter, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, meter.mackenzie@epa.gov.

Tips for Reducing Lead Exposure



Families can take simple steps to reduce exposure to lead in soil. Removing shoes before entering your home, washing your hands, and using a damp cloth to wipe down high-touch surfaces are all effective strategies. For more information on reducing exposure to lead in soil, please scan the QR code.

YOU Have a Voice in the Change

EPA welcomes written (email or snail mail) public comments through the 30-day public comment period (June 1-June 30, 2026) for the Proposed Plan. Please email EPAButtePPcomments@epa.gov or send your comments to the EPA office in Helena (please visit epa.gov/butte for instructions on how to mail your comment).

Verbal comments can be given at the public meeting (June 16). A stenographer will be present to record public comments.

After the comment period closes, all comments will be evaluated, and modifications may be made to the Proposed Plan as appropriate. The comments received and EPA's responses to them will be provided in a Responsiveness Summary, issued as part of the ROD Amendment formalizing the changes in the Proposed Plan.

EPA's National Lead Directive Prompts BPSOU Cleanup Changes

In October 2025, the EPA released a new Directive for residential soil cleanups at Superfund sites. This Directive updated EPA's 1994 Lead Guidance, established a standardized screening level of 200 mg/kg soil-lead, and lowered the target blood-lead level from 10 micrograms per deciliter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$) to 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$. While the EPA acknowledges there is no known safe level of lead in blood, the 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ blood lead target is used to prioritize resources to protect children from the highest, most immediate hazards addressable under CERCLA. The EPA will continue to work with the Butte-Silver Bow Health Department and WIC to prioritize the sampling of

those residences where there is a resident with an elevated blood lead level.

The proposed changes in this 2026 Proposed Plan only modify the component of the BPSOU Selected Remedy that addresses contaminated residential soils and interior dust, consistent with the new blood lead level target established in EPA's 2025 Directive, to ensure protection of human health and the environment within the BPSOU. The 2025 Directive also recognizes that layers of protection, such as institutional controls and informational devices, enhance the effectiveness of response actions.

Public Meeting

(provide formal verbal comments)

Tuesday, June 16

6-7 p.m.

Library Auditorium at Montana Tech

1300 W. Park St., Butte

Parking: after the statue of Marcus Daly, down the hill, past the library auditorium on the right.

Open House

Please join us from 5-6 p.m. outside the Library Auditorium **before the formal public meeting** for an open house to learn more about proposed changes and chat with the site team.