



# CTEC



## September-November 2024 Superfund Update

### Current Activities

#### New Cleanup Plan for Residential Lead

EPA's plan to lower the residential soil cleanup level for the toxic metal lead was released in October and is one of the most significant changes to the Butte Superfund remedy in the past 20 years. The cleanup level would be lowered from 1,200 parts per million (ppm) to 175 (ppm). The new level will be used for residential private properties, as well as schools, parks, playgrounds, and daycares. This will bring Butte in line with the new national guidance that seeks to ensure lower public exposure to lead at EPA cleanups across the country.

The Residential Metals Abatement Program (RMAP) will continue to serve sampling and cleanup. Currently, Butte-Silver Bow does the RMAP work on private properties and Atlantic Richfield does work on schools, parks, playgrounds, and daycares. The proposal doubles the size of the area covered and would include most of the flats. EPA's map of the new area is shown below. Because the cleanup level is being lowered, some properties that were previously cleaned up by RMAP will need to be revisited. Property owners outside of the outlined area can request RMAP sampling, but are not a part of the proposed boundary change where sampling and if warranted cleanup will be mandated.



The timeline for cleaning up all properties would be extended 25 years, to about 2050. To give an idea of the scale of the work, as of the end of 2023, 1,500 residences had been cleaned up since the 1980s. The new boundary (shown in purple) includes an additional 7,200 residences, in addition to the 4,700 within the existing boundary. Under current staffing levels, RMAP attends to about 650 properties annually. EPA's proposed plan says additional crews will be needed.

EPA's plan is currently a proposal, meaning it must be formally adopted for the work to begin. EPA is accepting community comment on the plan until February 14<sup>th</sup>. Comments can be as simple as stating your support for the plan. Instructions for commenting to EPA are found at their website:

<https://www.epa.gov/butte/changes-are-proposed-lead-cleanup-residential-soils-butte>

## **Copper Mountain**

Butte's Copper Mountain Recreation Complex sits atop two waste repositories; one is Superfund waste excavated from Silver Bow Creek in the late 1990s, the second is the old Butte-Silver Bow Landfill which is not covered by Superfund. Copper Mountain has been covered recently in the news, but it may not be clear exactly what has been found or the schedule for addressing problems with the waste repository.

It is suspected that the waste cap is not working to prevent infiltration of precipitation and park irrigation water. Contaminated water has been found in seeps near the northeastern perimeter of the repository, in surface water in Grove Creek, and a groundwater plume. Atlantic Richfield has completed extensive sampling over the past five years, and recently released a large data report. The data report is not a plan for fixing the site; that is still to come. The sampling did find that the surface soil at the recreation complex met all current cleanup levels although a small area may need to be cleaned up if the proposed new residential lead levels are adopted as expected.

In the next year, Atlantic Richfield will prepare an evaluation and recommendations report that updates the "conceptual site model" which technically means a concise description of what is happening with contaminants housed within the repository. That report will also outline any corrective actions needed.

## **Publicly Observable Superfund Remedy Design Meetings**

December 3 (Tuesday), 9:00-11:00 AM: Atlantic Richfield Remedial Design/Remedial Action Progress Meeting.

December 10 (Tuesday), 9:00-10:00 AM: Residential Metals Abatement Program (RMAP) Progress Meeting.

Publicly observable meetings can be accessed by signing up for EPA's Butte Superfund email newsletter by emailing Community Involvement Coordinator Katherine Jenkins at [jenkins.katherine@epa.gov](mailto:jenkins.katherine@epa.gov) or from the calendar at EPA's website [www.epa.gov/butte](http://www.epa.gov/butte).

## **Upcoming Remedy Design Schedule**

November 21: Atlantic Richfield released the Draft Final Materials Management Plan for the Consent Decree Silver Bow Creek corridor projects. This plan outlines material sampling, onsite material reuse, backfill sources, trucking routes, and waste disposal locations including the Berkeley Pit and three possible repositories location on property owned by Atlantic Richfield, BSB, and Montana Resources within the active and historic mining area near the Berkeley Pit.

The following remedy design milestones are expected in December based on Atlantic Richfield's schedule: Buffalo Gulch 95% Design, Butte Reduction Works 60% Design, and Diggings East 95% Design.