

Iron King Mine / Humboldt Smelter Superfund Site

Environmental Protection Agency Updates on Current Work at Superfund Site

Here at EPA, we recognize that it has been some time since we provided an update about our work at the Iron King Mine / Humboldt Smelter (IKHS) Superfund site. We would therefore like to describe our current and recent activities at the site.

Key Reports. At the time of our last visit in spring of 2015, EPA mentioned that we had not yet completed two critical pieces of our work: the **human health risk assessment** and the **remedial investigation report**. EPA now has these two reports in draft and will present them to the Dewey-Humboldt community in a few months' time.

The completion of the remedial investigation report and the human health risk assessment are an essential part of the Superfund cleanup process, which EPA must follow at all Superfund sites. These reports will inform how EPA designs cleanup options, not only for the residential yards affected by the site, but also for the site's non-residential areas containing contaminated material, such as the site's tailings piles.

Residential Yards. As we proceed, EPA intends to prioritize residential yard cleanups, thus focusing first and foremost on mitigating health risks where people live. As we have discussed in our fact sheets and community meetings, soils in the vast majority of residential yards have not been contaminated by the site. However, cleanup action will be appropriate in some yards. Prior to starting cleanup, we will conduct extensive outreach to ensure residents are aware of our cleanup process and timeframe. So far, the residential cleanups that EPA has completed at the IKHS site have entailed removing contaminated soil and replacing it with clean soil. However, EPA is currently evaluating other cleanup options in order to identify the most efficient – and effective – cleanup method.

Drinking Water. EPA has recently received questions about arsenic contamination in private drinking wells in Dewey-Humboldt. Most private drinking water wells that EPA has sampled do not have arsenic above drinking water standards. However, levels are variable and groundwater in some locations in the Dewey-Humboldt area contains arsenic and other contaminants at levels above drinking water standards. *These contaminants are naturally occurring due to the surrounding geology and do not originate from tailings at the IKHS site.* EPA urges all Dewey-Humboldt residents using private drinking wells to get their tap water tested for lead and arsenic, and, if levels above drinking water standards are found, to install an in-home water treatment system. For more information about testing private drinking wells, please contact the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) at (602) 364-3128 or the University of Arizona at (520) 621-3516.

We will be reaching out in the next few months to plan our next public meeting. In the meantime, if you have questions or concerns about EPA activities in Dewey-Humboldt, please contact Heather Parker, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, at (415) 972-3112 or parker.heather@epa.gov.