

Iron King Mine / Humboldt Smelter Superfund Site

Environmental Protection Agency Updates on Current Work at Superfund Site

As part of our efforts to keep the Dewey-Humboldt community informed about developments and progress related to our work at the Iron King Mine / Humboldt Smelter (IKHS) Superfund site, EPA would like to describe our recent and upcoming activities at the site.

EPA has completed sampling, screening evaluation, and health risk assessment for almost 600 residential properties in Dewey-Humboldt. We have found that the soils in the vast majority of yards do not pose an unacceptable health risk to residents as a result of the former mine or smelter operations. However, EPA has identified a limited number of properties where levels of lead (or arsenic) in yard soil are high enough that exposure to the soils over the long term could pose a health risk.

In late January, EPA obtained authorization and funding to proceed with a cleanup action for soils at the limited number of residential yards where cleanup is warranted. Planning for the cleanup is now underway, which includes reaching out directly to homeowners whose yards may be impacted and identifying sources of clean soil to replace contaminated soils removed during the cleanup. In the upcoming weeks, EPA will issue a fact sheet that will include in-depth details about the residential cleanup, what it will entail, and how we made our decisions about which yards would require cleanup. EPA is also planning an in-person community meeting and Town Council update for late March or early April, and meeting dates and location will be announced in the upcoming weeks.

EPA has also made progress on the Feasibility Study for the site, which is a study of cleanup alternatives that examines and evaluates options for addressing contamination at the non-residential areas of the site (such as the tailings pile, flood plain filled with tailings, the dam, and the smelter property). While this study will likely take a year in total to complete, we hope to be able to present some preliminary information about cleanup options in the upcoming months.

We will be reaching out in the next few weeks about our upcoming outreach. 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.