



Region 7

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Fact Sheet

November 2010

EPA to Hold a Public Meeting on Removal of Lead-Contaminated Soils from Schools and Child Care Facilities in St. Francois County, Missouri

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7 will hold a Public Meeting on November 29, 2010, to share information and answer questions about a project to remove lead-contaminated soils from the grounds of 11 schools and 16 child care facilities in St. Francois County, Missouri.

As a result of EPA's recent response actions to remove and replace lead-contaminated soils at Central Middle School in Park Hills, it was determined that additional testing should be conducted at schools and child care facilities in St. Francois County. Testing of soils was conducted at 28 facilities, which included 11 schools and 17 child care/Head Start centers. The testing confirmed elevated levels of lead in the soil at 27 of the 28 facilities. EPA, along with the St. Francois County Health Department and other state and federal agencies, will hold the public meeting to present the history of the Big River Mine Tailings/St. Joe Minerals Corp. Superfund Site, discuss upcoming response actions at the 27 facilities, and answer questions.

At the meeting, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MDHSS) will also

PUBLIC MEETING

**Monday, November 29, 2010
6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Mineral Area College
5270 Flat River Road
Park Hills, Missouri**

EPA Region 7 is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities. If you require a reasonable accommodation to participate in the public meeting, please notify the EPA Reasonable Accommodations Coordinator, Jonathan Cooper (1-800-223-0425), or by e-mail @ cooper.jonathan@epa.gov at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. Speech or hearing impaired individuals should e-mail or call using the local relay service.

provide free blood lead screenings. Results of the screenings will be available the same night.

Young children are typically exposed to lead by playing in contaminated soils and then putting dirty fingers in their mouths, and by breathing contaminated dust. Lead can build up in children's bodies and can cause lead poisoning.

Although the effects of lead poisoning are a potential concern for humans of all ages, children younger than seven years old and pregnant women are especially at risk. It is important that children in this age range be tested every year, because lead-poisoned children may not look or act sick. Free lead tests will be offered to persons regardless of age at the November 29 meeting. Tests at other times can be arranged through the local health department or through a physician.

BACKGROUND

The Big River Mine Tailings/St. Joe Minerals Corp. Superfund Site is a part of Missouri's Old Lead Belt, where mining and milling has occurred for more than a century. Over time, mining wastes containing elevated levels of lead and zinc were left behind, posing a threat to human health and the environment.

EPA and Missouri state agencies have been addressing lead contaminated soils in St. Francois County for more than a decade, providing health education, soil assessments, and a variety of response actions.

ADDITIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

Lead is a toxic metal that is harmful if inhaled or swallowed. Children are more sensitive to lead than adults and can develop lifelong learning disabilities and behavioral problems from lead exposure. Pregnant women and nursing mothers should also avoid exposure to lead to protect their children. Lead poisoning can cause negative health effects in infants and young children including, but not limited to:

- ✓ slowed physical growth;
- ✓ hearing problems;
- ✓ nervous system damage;
- ✓ learning disabilities;
- ✓ hyperactivity and other behavioral problems; and
- ✓ decreased intelligence.

Lead exposure and its effects can be reduced by washing hands after playing outside and before meals, vacuuming often and dusting with a damp cloth, and eating a diet high in calcium and iron.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The administrative record and site-related documents for the Big River Mine Tailings/St. Joe Minerals Corp. Superfund Site are available for review at the following locations:

- St. Francois County Health Department
1025 West Main
Park Hills, Missouri
- EPA Region 7 Records Center
901 North 5th Street
Kansas City, Kansas

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact:

Debbie Kring

Community Involvement Coordinator
U.S. EPA - Region 7
Office of Public Affairs
901 North 5th Street
Kansas City, Kansas 66101
(913) 551-7725 or
Toll Free @ 1-800-223-0425
E-mail: kring.debbie@epa.gov

Heath Smith

On-Scene Coordinator
U.S. EPA – Region 7
Superfund Division
1051 Madison 212
Fredericktown, Missouri 63645
(573) 783-3351
E-mail: smith.heath@epa.gov