



Abandoned Uranium Mines – Cove Transfer Stations

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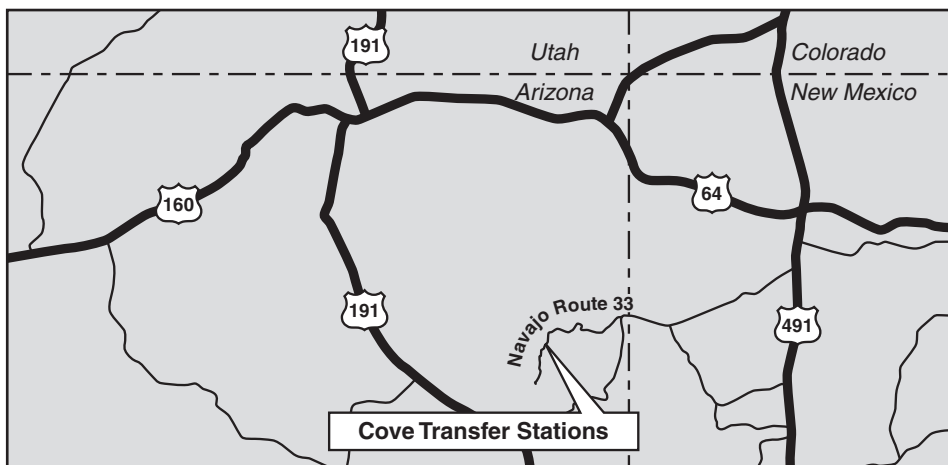
USEPA to Address Uranium Contamination at Cove Transfer Stations

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Region 9 is working to protect the residents of Cove Chapter by cleaning up residual mine waste from past uranium mining operations which occurred between 1940s and the 1980s. In Cove Chapter, the uranium mining operations included two transfer stations where uranium-containing ore from the mines was stockpiled awaiting transfer to trucks that would take the ore to the Shiprock Mill for processing.

The two transfer stations in Cove Chapter still contain some left over uranium-containing ore from the stockpiles from when the mines were active. This residual uranium-containing ore is hazardous and can adversely affect human health; people should avoid coming in contact with it and/or walking through the transfer stations.

Because of the health risks, beginning next month (September 2012) USEPA Region 9 will be removing the contaminated soil from Transfer Station 1 and placing it at Transfer Station 2 where it will be sealed to stabilize the contaminated soil. After the soil is sealed at Transfer Station 2, a fence will be placed around the entire site with signs warning people to keep out of the fenced area. This removal action is a temporary measure to stabilize the contaminated soil while a long-term cleanup remedy is developed. USEPA Region 9 will discuss long-term options with the community and the Navajo Nation before making any decisions about permanent disposal.

USEPA will also be conducting constant air quality monitoring during excavation activities to make sure that residents in the immediate area, including the students at Cove Day School, will be safe from any dust coming from the excavation. It is expected the removal action will take 4-6 weeks to complete.



For More Information

For specific questions about the Cove Chapter Transfer Stations and this removal action, please contact:

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