

Notice of Construction Activities at Opalite Mine

August 2020



Opalite Mine in southern Malheur County. Source: Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), with support from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), is securing and restricting access to contamination at the old Opalite mercury mine in southern Malheur County, near the Nevada border. Work will begin August 10 and continue for two weeks.

The goal is to reduce access to the old mercury mine because it is dangerous.

The site has large piles of mine waste rocks that contain arsenic, mercury and antimony. Dust from these rocks is hazardous to people's health. There are also unsafe structures, crumbling walls and unstable mine shafts that pose hazards.

Work activities include:

- Permanently restricting vehicle access to the site by installing gates, constructing berms (mounds or hills of soil), and building a bypass road to reroute people around the site. The mine is on private property, but access has not been limited in the past.
- Installing restricted access signs to notify people of the hazards at the site.
- Removing, stabilizing, and reburying a small pile of mine waste on-site that contains extremely high concentrations of contaminants.

The site is owned by Bradley Mining Company. It's about 15 miles northwest of McDermitt, Nevada, and is surrounded by private land.

For more information:

- Visit EPA's Administrative Record web page at <https://go.usa.gov/xfd8U> or DEQ's cleanup webpage at <https://ordeq.org/opalite>
- Contact: **Mike Boykin** • 206-553-6362 • boykin.michael@epa.gov

COVID-19 precautions: EPA and DEQ are taking all necessary precautions to protect the health and safety of local communities and site workers during cleanup activities.

Request information in an alternate format or in a language other than English by email or phone.

Solicite información en español por correo electrónico o por teléfono: 206-553-1838 • knudsen.laura@epa.gov