

# Silver Bow Creek / Butte Area Residential Metals Abatement Program

Bulletin #1

(RMAP)

March 31, 2010



**Residential Investigation and  
Cleanup Work Completed  
as of December 2009**

## Sampling and Inspections

- 1,464 yards sampled
- Lead-based paint inspections completed in 816 homes
- Interior dust samples collected from 396 homes
- 444 attics sampled

## Abatements (cleanups)

- 377 residential yards cleaned up
- Lead-based paint abatements at 149 homes
- Interior cleanings have been done at 174 homes
- 92 attics abated

## Blood lead testing

- 8,568 blood lead tests completed
- Of 995 children tested in 2008, 2009, **not one** above the permissible blood lead level.

EPA's 2006 Record Of Decision (ROD) for cleanup of Butte Soils included the **Residential Metals Abatement Program**. The Program is designed to address exposure to lead, arsenic, and mercury contamination and is a key part of the overall environmental clean up in Butte. EPA is confident that the program protects the health of Butte citizens.

The residential metals abatement program addresses both mining and non-mining contamination. Mining contamination includes waste rock, tailings, and aerial emissions. Non-mining contamination includes lead-based paint, lead solder, and lead pipes.

Butte-Silver Bow County Health Department administers the program. The County is funded by the Atlantic Richfield Company under EPA and DEQ's direction. The metals abatement program also includes:

- Long-term tracking and data management
- Education and outreach
- Medical monitoring

mg/kg = parts per million

The program requires that all residential properties within the Butte Priority Soils area be sampled within 10 years. Residences with lead of more than 1200 mg/kg or arsenic greater than 250 mg/kg in the soils will be cleaned up. A home's interior, including attic living spaces, will be cleaned if lead or arsenic is found in dust within a living space at those same levels or if mercury is found at a level greater than 147 mg/kg. Affected populations—people having elevated levels of metals in blood or urine and sensitive populations— young children and pregnant or nursing women will get priority for sampling and cleanup.

The Health Department will sample dust, soil and paint from homes and yards. People with elevated levels of contaminants on their properties may provide blood and urine samples to check for metals in the body. Currently, that monitoring includes blood lead testing, but will soon include a blood test for mercury and urine test for arsenic.

Over the next 10 years, the Health Department will reach out to Butte residents with the details of the program and how they can get their residence or yard tested. If you are interested in having your home or yard sampled, please call the Health Department at 406-497-5042.

# Blood Lead Testing

The primary means of exposure to lead in the environment in Butte is by ingestion—most commonly from contaminated dust on fingers, toys, and other items. This means children are the most exposed group. Exposure to lead can cause problems with learning development. Again, the risks are highest in children.

When blood lead testing began in the early 1990s, the percentage of people (mostly children) having blood lead concentrations above the permissible level (9.9 µg/dl or micrograms per deci-liter) was 8 percent. Since that time, it has *dropped steadily*, especially as the abatement and education programs were conducted at high-risk homes. Since 2004, the percentage of people having elevated blood lead levels has been below 1 percent. In 2008 and 2009, none of the 995 children tested were above the permissible level. Urinary testing for arsenic is a component of the program and more information will be available from the Health Department when this testing becomes available.

## Do you Need More Information?

- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:** Sara Sparks, Remedial Project Manger, 782-7415 or Wendy Thomi, Community Involvement Coordinator, 406-457-5037
- **Montana Department of Environmental Quality:** Joe Griffin, Project Officer, 560-6060
- **Butte Silver Bow County Planning Department:** Tom Malloy, 497-6257
- **Butte Silver Bow County Health Department:** Eric Hassler, 497-5042
- **Citizens Technical Environmental Committee:** Suzanne Nordwick, 494-7433
- **Atlantic Richfield Company:** Marci Sheehan, 723-1831



Yard cleanup



Attic cleanup

## Documents Can Be Found At These Butte Locations

**Citizens Technical Environmental Committee**  
27 West Park Street  
Monday - Thursday from 10 am to 3 pm

**U.S. EPA Butte Office**  
155 W. Granite (Under the Courthouse)  
Monday - Friday 9 am to 4 pm

[www.buttectec.org](http://www.buttectec.org)

[www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/mt/sbcbutte](http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/mt/sbcbutte)