



Region 7

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Fact Sheet

October 2008

EPA ANNOUNCES PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD on the PROPOSED PLAN for a Final Remedy at the Omaha Lead Superfund Site Omaha, Nebraska

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7 has released the Proposed Plan which describes the Agency's preferred alternative to address the remaining lead-contaminated soils at the Omaha Lead Site. The Proposed Plan describes the final cleanup options that were considered and presents EPA's preferred remedy to address the lead-contaminated residential soils that have not yet been cleaned up under EPA's ongoing response action in Omaha. A 30-day public comment period will run **through December 1, 2008**. Comments may be submitted by mail, electronically, or at two scheduled public meetings:

Public Meetings

EPA will hold two meetings to present final cleanup options. Both meetings will be held on Tuesday, November 18, 2008 at the following locations:

- ❖ **Omaha South High School**
4519 South 24th Street
(4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.)
- ❖ **North Omaha High School**
4410 North 36th Street
(7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.)

BACKGROUND

The Omaha Lead Site includes child-care facilities, residences, and other residential-type properties in eastern Omaha with lead-contaminated surface soils resulting from past industrial emissions. The total area of the final focus area, where soil sampling is being completed at Omaha Lead Site, is approximately 27 square miles and includes more than 40,000 properties. The final focus area includes a portion of the area bounded by Read Street to the north, 56th Street to the west, and Harrison Street to the south. The Omaha Lead Site is bounded by the Missouri River to the east.

In 1999, EPA began excavating and replacing soils at child care facilities and residential properties in eastern Omaha that were contaminated with lead through airborne emissions from historic lead smelting and refining operations in the area. In December, 2004, EPA issued an interim Record of Decision (ROD) that provided for excavation and soil replacement at an estimated 5,600 of the most highly contaminated properties in eastern Omaha while additional studies were performed to support a final remedy for the remaining properties. The Interim ROD also expanded the scope of the cleanup to address deteriorating

lead-based paint that threatens the continued effectiveness of the soil cleanup.

While this work was underway, EPA completed a Final Remedial Investigation and Final Feasibility Study, which were released for public review in October, 2008. These studies concluded that lead-contaminated soil exceeding 400 parts per million (ppm) in residential soils at the site poses an unacceptable risk to children's health. Approximately 10,000 residential properties at the Omaha Lead Site have soil lead concentrations exceeding 400 ppm that will not be cleaned up under the interim remedy.

On the basis of these recent studies and additional information contained in the Administrative Record for the Omaha lead Site, EPA has identified a preferred remedy for lead-contaminated soils at the remaining properties in eastern Omaha. This preferred remedy is presented in a Proposed Plan document that is being released for public review and comment. EPA will consider comments received and select a final remedy for the Omaha Lead site in a Final Record of Decision.

PROPOSED PLAN ALTERNATIVES

The Proposed Plan presents three cleanup alternatives which were developed and compared in the Omaha Lead Site Final Feasibility Study. The three alternatives include:

- § No Action
- § Excavation and replacement of contaminated soils
- § Phosphate treatment of contaminated soils

Under the No Action alternative, no additional work would be performed to address lead-contaminated soils at the Site. Future exposure

to lead-contaminated soil would continue to pose an unacceptable health risk to children.

The second cleanup option involves excavation and replacement of soils exceeding 400 ppm at the 10,000 remaining properties. The estimated cost of this alternative is \$255 million. Excavation and soil replacement is currently being implemented in Omaha under the interim remedy, and is a well demonstrated alternative. This alternative includes stabilization of exterior lead-based paint in cases where the continued effectiveness of the soil remedy is threatened. The alternative also includes providing high-efficiency (HEPA) household vacuums to residents where interior dust levels exceed allowable limits. Only those properties where soil cleanups are performed will be eligible for exterior lead-based paint stabilization or HEPA vacuums. The alternative also includes public health education regarding health hazards in the community and operation of a local lead registry which will provide information regarding conditions at individual properties.

The third cleanup option considered involves phosphate treatment of contaminated soils to lower the risk associated with lead-contaminated soils that would remain in residential yards. A Treatability Study was performed that indicates that phosphate treatment may be effective for soils contaminated at levels up to 500 ppm. Excavation and soil replacement would be required for soils contaminated at levels exceeding 500 ppm. This alternative has an estimated cost of \$359 million and includes the elements of the second alternative involving lead-based paint stabilization, interior dust response, public health education, and a local lead registry.

The EPA Proposed Plan identifies the second cleanup alternative, soil excavation and replacement, as the preferred final remedy for the Omaha Lead Site.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

EPA encourages public participation and will not make any final decisions on a cleanup alternative until thoroughly reviewing all comments received from the public.

Comments may be made at the public meetings or sent to EPA at the address below:

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

For additional details, EPA's Final Proposed Plan and the supporting documents for the Omaha Lead Site can be found online at:

http://www.epa.gov/region07/cleanup/npl_files/omaha_lead/public_review_remedial_omaha_lead.html

Or at one of the following repositories:

EPA's Public Information Center (North)
3040 Lake Street
Omaha, Nebraska
(402) 991-9583

EPA's Public Information Center (South)
4911 South 25th Street
Omaha, Nebraska
(402) 731-3045

Omaha Public Library
W. Dale Clark Main Library
215 South 15th Street
Omaha, Nebraska
(402) 444-4800

Washington Branch Library

2816 Ames Avenue
Omaha, Nebraska
(402) 444-4849

EPA Region 7 Records Center

901 North 5th Street
Kansas City, Kansas
1-800-223-0425

Repository information will be available for individuals to review on CD ROM, as well as in hard copy form. EPA's Public Information Centers will provide CDs to individuals upon request.

At the end of the public comment period, EPA will summarize all public comments and Agency responses in a "Responsiveness Summary", which will become a part of EPA's final Record of Decision for this site.

If you have questions about the upcoming meetings, the Superfund process, or need additional information about the Omaha Lead Site, please contact:

Debbie Kring
Community Involvement Coordinator
EPA Region 7 - 901 North 5th Street
Kansas City, Kansas 66101
(913) 551-7725 or
Toll-free 1-800-223-0425
E-Mail: kring.debbie@epa.gov

EPA Region 7 is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities. If you require a reasonable accommodation to participate in one of the public meetings, please notify the EPA Reasonable Accommodations Coordinator, Sharon Nible at (1-800-223-0425), or by e-mail @ nible.sharon@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.