CONFIDENTIAL

WEEKLY HOT TOPICS REPORT for RA/DRA Region 8

Week ending June 29, 2018

OFFICE OF ECOSYSTEMS PROTECTION AND REMEDIATION

HOT ISSUES AND IMPORTANT DEADLINES:

Libby Asbestos Superfund Site, Personal Matters / Ex. 6 Libby, Montana
Property Owner Requesting Additional Soil Removal

Key Message: On May 3, 2018, contractors working for the Libby Asbestos Project began a detailed investigation of a portion of the property at Personal Matters / Ex. 6 in Libby, Montana. This property had been investigated in 2002 and 2015 but no response actions were warranted. Since that time, the property owner had encountered significant quantities of vermiculite while putting in a commercial garden and requested an investigation in the area proposed for the garden.

- The new garden covered over 8100 square feet and was assessed resulting in approximately 400 square feet of the garden needing soil removal. The construction contractor completed removal on May 28, 2018 with all post construction samples confirmed non-detect for Libby Asbestos Amphibole (LA).
- During the course of the clean-up action, the land owner observed the presence of vermiculite in the garden soil. Although LA can be associated with vermiculite, the presence of LA, not the presence of vermiculite has been the determining factor in deciding if a response action is necessary. The land owner had several conversations with Mike Cirian, Remedial Project Manager, Deborah McKean, Toxicologist, and Stan Christensen, Unit Leader concerning the protocols for soil clean up reiterating that LA and not vermiculite is the driver for soil removal at the Libby Site.
- The landowner hired her own consultant who had worked on the project as and EPA contractor several years ago but was no longer employed in such a capacity. Upon inspection of some of the garden, the consultant found what turned out to be approximately 10 small pieces of suspected tremolite (a form of asbestos) and a fair amount of vermiculite. The landowner was convinced that the presence of any vermiculite automatically meant that it presented a potential long-term health threat to anyone digging/tilling in the garden. The team explained during phone calls and on-site visits that risk to human health was determined by the presence of Libby Amphibole fibers and the post construction sampling confirmed non-detect for Libby Asbestos Amphibole. The landowner was still not satisfied.
- The team offered to excavate 4 to 6 inches of soil in the garden area to remove any significant quantities of vermiculite in an attempt to satisfy the owner and assure site protectiveness. The landowner demanded that all vermiculite be removed. When told that the offer to remove the extra 4 to 6 inches of soil is the extent of what we are able to do based on our cleanup procedures for this site, the landowner said that she would accept that offer but still thinks the excavation should go to 18 inch depths and was going to contact US Senator Tester about this issue.
- The Libby Team continues to work with the landowner on this issue and is drafting a letter to her documenting our cleanup decision at this site including the offer for additional soil removal.
- Contact: Stan Christensen, Unit Leader. 312-6694; Mike Cirian, Project Manager, 406-203-6194

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The Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs) for the Smurfit-Stone Mill site in Frenchtown, Montana, notified EPA on June 22, 2018 that the Berm Stability Evaluation Report would be delayed 31 days and submitted by July 31, 2018

Key Message: EPA is evaluating the notice from the PRPs about delayed deliverable, and will determine whether to issue a notice of violation and assess stipulated penalties under the 2015 Administrative Order on Consent.

- The PRPs allege that the response to recent flooding on the Clark Fork River has caused delay.
- The PRPs allege that the late snow cover delayed the ability to collect LiDAR survey data to be used in the evaluation of the berm.
- The PRPs are also proposing to delay the submittal of the EPA-required Long-Term Berm Contingency Plan scheduled for July 6, 2018, but have not proposed an alternate date.
- Clark Fork River Flows are dropping rapidly following spring runoff and are currently less than half of what they were in early May during the flooding event.
- EPA and the PRPs continue to monitor the berm along the Clark Fork River.
- Contact: Sara Sparks, 406-491-4016

OFFICE OF ENFORCEMENT, COMPLIANCE & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

HOT ISSUES AND IMPORTANT DEADLINES:

SDWA Enforcement Issued an Emergency Administrative Order to City of Casper in Natrona County

Key Message: On June 26, 2018, the EPA issued a 1431 Order in response to a potential imminent and substantial endangerment at the City of Casper public water system located in Wyoming.

- The City of Casper Public Utilities Manager notified EPA on June 25, 2018, that the system found dead mice in a 10 million gallon finished water storage tank during an inspection of the tank.
- The tank was isolated from the system for the inspection, and will remain isolated until the tank is drained, disinfected and repaired, and the system is notified by EPA that the tank can be returned to service.
- After speaking with the R8 Office of Water Protection's toxicologist, EPA has determined that a potential imminent and substantial endangerment to human health may exist at the System.
- The system is currently serving approximately 56,343 residents and provides wholesale water to 5,564 individuals.
- EPA has informed the system representative of their requirement to drain, clean and disinfect the tank, and flush the distribution system.
- Prior to Order issuance, EPA will consult with Wyoming DEQ and Department of Health (includes the State Epidemiologist).
- EPA will work closely with the system and the Drinking Water Program to ensure the protection of public health.
- Technical Contact: Olive Hofstader, 312-6467; Management Contact: Tiffany Cantor, 312-6521

OFFICE OF PARTNERSHIPS AND REGULATORY ASSISTANCE

No report

OFFICE OF TECHNICAL AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES

No report

OFFICE OF WATER PROTECTION

No report

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