ATSDR-Sponsored Listening Session and Actions Under Consideration Briefing for Anaconda Smelter Superfund Site

For: Douglas Benevento, EPA Region 8 Administrator

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Introduction

On May 10, 2018, ATSDR sponsored a listening session in Anaconda, Montana to characterize broad community health concerns in the context of public health practice. ATSDR deployed Atlanta and Denver based staff. Approximately 70 people attended and, of those, 54 provided detailed accounts of health concerns as they relate to the Superfund Site. The information collected serves to inform a responsive public health strategy and subsequent action plan. ATSDR included the following agencies:

- Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (MT DPHHS)
- Anaconda Deer Lodge County Health Department
- National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOSH)
- EPA (CI Coordinator available to answer EPA related questions)

Professionals from multiple public health disciplines (i.e., toxicology, epidemiology, addiction services, engineering, and medicine) interacted with community members and local officials.

ATSDR and MT DPPHHS will hold a public meeting in late June or early July to present findings and the action plan to the community.

Results and Actions Under Consideration

The table below summarizes concerns raised and responses under consideration.

Community Health Concern	Action Items (potential)
Exposures to arsenic and lead at levels that cause adverse health effects.	*ATSDR Exposure Investigation (collection of blood lead and urine arsenic with report) for Anaconda and Opportunity. Outreach to improve participation in long term PRP-funded biomonitoring for children. ATSDR MDs to work with local clinicians on best practices for environmental medicine.*
Dust from slag pile creates unhealthy levels of air contamination during wind events and during remediation.	*Review previous air monitoring reports. Review dust suppression protocols for slag piles during construction to determine if they are protective. ATSDR summary report of findings. Consideration of air sampling; ATSDR design sampling plan with EPA.*
Attic Dust clean ups will devalue (sic) homes.	*Provide health education on risks; offer ATSDR letter consultations to estimate potential risk and provide exposure prevention strategy.*

Increased cancer in community.	*Conduct cancer incidence review based on state tumor registry (though noting these data have limitations); coordinated effort of State Epidemiologist with support from ATSDR*
Increased levels neuro-degenerative disease compared to other communities.	*Health education at local level; fund academic partner to evaluate MS incidence; encourage participation in ATSDR ALS registry.*
Municipal water quality adversely affected (at the tap) by the slag used to backfill trenches that hold drinking water lines.	*Review sampling protocol. Sampling at tap. ATSDR analysis, interpretation and reporting of these data.*
Overall health of community is poor.	*Advocate for renewed public health needs assessment at the county level (the last was in 2013) to evaluate issues such as access to mental health care, addiction, and aging.*
Uptake of arsenic through gardening and consumption of local game presents a health risk.	*Health education in partnership with MSU Agricultural Extension. Evaluate specific uptake by common fruits and vegetables grown in region. Review of plant/animal tissue samples (if any) previously taken through SF program.*
Confusion about where contamination is located. Unable to interpret letters explaining residential soil contamination.	*Geospatial analysis in format easily understood by public. Health education and outreach. Capacity building at local level to distribute maps and information.*