EPA Region 7 Fact Sheet:
Bridgeton Municipal Athletic Complex Radiation Screening
Bridgeton, Missouri – May 2014

What is EPA Region 7 doing at the Bridgeton Municipal Athletic Complex?
On May 19, 2014, EPA began conducting a scientific screening of the Bridgeton Municipal Athletic Complex, or BMAC, to check for radiation.

Why is EPA doing this screening?
A concern was recently raised about the suitability of BMAC for use in light of what has been described as a radiation "spike" detected in a drainage ditch at the complex by a member of the community using donated equipment. While the usefulness of this information is very limited due to the absence of quality assurance/quality control during the collection of the data, this unverified information has created significant public uncertainty as to the suitability of BMAC for use. Although all of the scientifically validated data known to EPA and the State of Missouri confirms that BMAC remains suitable for use, EPA has initiated a radiation screening program at BMAC to confirm this and to respond to public concerns.

What does this screening involve?
EPA Region 7 staff, assisted by EPA Region 5 staff, will use radiation detecting instruments, global positioning system (GPS) equipment, and computer software, all loaded into small push-carts or ATVs, to carefully scan BMAC for radiation. As the carts or ATVs roll slowly across the surface of the facility, detectors will scan for the presence of gamma radiation. The computer software will create a detailed map of site conditions.

Will EPA Region 7 take any soil samples as part of this screening?
Yes. We intend to collect soil samples at locations where the scanning detects radiation at elevated levels. In order to determine what is "elevated," EPA will collect and analyze several soil samples from other nearby locations to help our scientists understand the levels of naturally-occurring radiation in the soil, so that we can make valid comparisons. Samples will be tested for uranium, thorium, and radium.

You mean radiation occurs naturally in the soil around here?
Very low levels of radiation occur naturally in soils all across the country. If radiation is detected at BMAC, EPA's scientific screening and lab analysis will help describe the materials present.

How long will this screening activity take?
Weather permitting, EPA anticipates it may take one to two weeks to complete the work on the grounds at BMAC. EPA intends to do this field screening during hours that won't disrupt the normal operation of BMAC.

Is it safe to be near the screening equipment while it's running?
The field screening at BMAC will not pose a hazard to anyone visiting or using BMAC. EPA respectfully asks that anyone who comes to the facility during the screening maintain at least a 20 foot distance from the survey crews and their equipment while they are working, so they can complete this survey in a safe and timely manner.

Is it okay to use the facilities at BMAC now?
Based on all of the scientifically validated information presently known to EPA and the State of Missouri, BMAC remains suitable for use. EPA recognizes the importance of the community being assured of BMAC's safety—it's why we're conducting this screening.

When will we have final results of this screening?
When all scientific data is gathered from the field screening, that data—along with any soil samples collected from BMAC—will be sent to an independent accredited professional scientific laboratory. Full lab analysis and the results of the quality-controlled, quality-assured data should be available after about 30 to 60 days of lab work.

Will the public get to see the final lab results?
Yes. EPA will make the final results available to the public, both online at its website, http://www.epa.gov/region7/cleanup/west_lake_landfill/index.htm , and through social and news media.

Is there someone I can contact if I have other questions about the screening?
Yes. Contact EPA Region 7 Community Involvement Coordinator Ben Washburn at 913-551-7364, or email him at washburn.ben@epa.gov