



Ore Milling Site Northwest of Speedway Blvd. and Silverbell Rd.

Overview

In June 2006, as part of a Parks and Recreation plan to develop public space on a parcel located northwest of Speedway Blvd. and Silverbell Rd, City of Tucson Environmental Services was asked to conduct a limited Environmental Site Assessment of this 21-acre property. Initial screening results indicate the presence of elevated levels of lead, arsenic and cadmium in soil samples. According to a report completed in July 2006 by Desert Archaeology, Inc., the site had been used as a tungsten ore mill during World War II. The City is conducting further testing at the site and has secured a portion of the property from public access. Environmental Services is in the process of completing two investigations to determine if there are mine shafts or tunnels on the property and to sample additional surface soils for potential metal concentrations. After testing has been completed, the City will determine how to effectively clean up the property so that it will not pose a risk to residents or the environment.

What was found on the property?

Concentrations of lead, arsenic and cadmium were found in soil in the vicinity of the ore milling site, approximately 2 acres in size, at levels exceeding concentrations that are considered protective of human health and the environment by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ).

Is my drinking water impacted?

No. Tucson Water drinking water wells that serve the neighborhoods in the area are located in Avra Valley more than 10 miles west of Tucson. There are no Tucson Water supply wells in the neighborhood. There may be private wells in the area. Please contact Environmental Services at (520) 791-5414 if you have a private well.

Are there any immediate threats to human health or the environment? What steps have been taken to eliminate exposure?

Upon receiving the results from the site assessment, the City immediately ordered fencing and signage to prevent public access and potential exposure. Residents who are concerned about the health risks should contact the Pima County Health Department at (520) 740-3755. The Health Department can provide additional information about testing services.

Will the property be cleaned up?

After a full environmental investigation has been completed, Environmental Services will determine the best way to clean up the site. Residents will be notified of the clean-up plan and the time frame for completion.

How will the property be used after the clean-up?

Once the property has been cleaned-up, it may be returned for some public use. Any plans for development of the property will be determined once the site has been effectively remediated.

For more information please contact:

Environmental Services (520) 791-5414
Tucson Water (water quality questions) (520) 791-4331

