

# BIG RIVER MINE TAILINGS SUPERFUND SITE

## ST. FRANCOIS COUNTY

### INFORMATION SHEET 2016



#### BACKGROUND

- ◆ The Big River Mine Tailings Superfund Site is located in a former mining region known as the “Old Lead Belt.” The site is comprised of eight large areas of mine/mill waste, and was listed on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Superfund National Priorities List in October 1992.
- ◆ Contamination from the Big River site impacts residential soil and sediment and fish in the Big River and Flat River Creek. The site has not contaminated private or public drinking water wells.
- ◆ In September 2011, the EPA published a Record of Decision that detailed the cleanup action for residential properties with lead contamination in soil above 400 parts per million (ppm) to be: excavation of contaminated soil and replacement with clean backfill and vegetative cover.
- ◆ For more information about the Big River Mine Tailings Superfund Site in Missouri you can visit EPA’s website at <http://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csitinfo.cfm?id=0701639>.

#### SAMPLING

- ◆ In October 2015, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MoDNR) sampled soil at 110 residential properties within one mile of the Federal Tailings Pile, which is located on St. Joe State Park and Missouri Mines Historic Site.
- ◆ The sampling involved collecting a small amount of surface soil from several places in residential yards.
- ◆ The October sampling documented approximately 89 percent of the 110 residential properties with at least some portion of the yard contaminated with lead above EPA’s health concern level of 400 ppm.

#### FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- ◆ If yard soils contain average levels of lead greater than 400 ppm, the MoDNR will coordinate with the EPA on cleanup activities and contact property owners in the near future.
- ◆ **Property owners or residents are not responsible to pay for cleanup of contaminated soil resulting from former lead mining activities.**
- ◆ A formal access agreement between the property owner and the MoDNR will be necessary for future soil cleanup.
- ◆ The MoDNR will meet with each property owner individually to discuss specific cleanup actions for their property.
- ◆ In general, the top 12 to 24 inches of lead contaminated soil will be excavated and the area will be filled with clean soil. Contaminated soil will be placed in a designated repository in the area.
- ◆ It is anticipated that cleanup activities will be completed over the next three years.
- ◆ You can keep informed about the progress of our investigation and cleanup efforts by checking MoDNR’s website at <http://dnr.mo.gov/env/hwp/sfund/bigriver.htm>.

## HEALTH INFORMATION/BLOOD LEAD TESTING

- ◆ Lead has no nutritional benefit for humans and no safe blood lead level in children or adults has been identified.
- ◆ Children are most at risk for lead poisoning as they may be more likely to be exposed to lead and are more sensitive to its effects than adults. Lead exposure to children may result in lifelong learning disabilities or behavioral problems.
- ◆ Lead can damage the nervous system, kidneys and reproductive system.
- ◆ Blood lead testing is recommended for children under seven years of age, pregnant women and women planning to have a child. Your family doctor can conduct this test or testing is available at the St. Francois County Health Center for \$15.00. You may also contact the St. Francois County Health Center or Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services for more information.
- ◆ All sources of potential lead exposure are important to identify and control. Other possible sources of residential lead exposure include lead-based paint and lead contaminated dust inside and outside the home, water from older indoor plumbing, some children's toys and jewelry, dust and debris from remodeling of old homes, and hobbies involving the use of lead such as soldering and working with fishing sinkers or firearm ammunition.
- ◆ You can reduce lead exposure and its effects by:
  - Avoiding bare soil areas on your property, especially in areas with elevated lead
  - Limiting outdoor play to grassy areas of the yard
  - Washing hands after playing outside and before meals
  - Vacuuming often and dusting with a damp cloth to help remove dust that may contain lead
  - Eating a diet high in calcium and iron and low in fat

## CONTACT INFORMATION

- ◆ For information on health-related questions regarding lead or blood lead testing please contact:

Missouri Department of Health  
and Senior Services  
P.O. Box 570 Jefferson City, MO 65102-0570  
573-751-6102 or 1-866-628-9891  
**Dennis Wambuguh**  
Chief, Health and Risk Assessment Unit  
dennis.wambuguh@health.mo.gov

St. Francois County Health Center  
1025 West Main Street  
Park Hills, MO 63601  
573-431-1947  
**Jane Howard, RN**  
howarj@lpha.mopublic.org  
[www.sfchc.org](http://www.sfchc.org)

- ◆ For information on the Big River Mine Tailings Superfund Site or the cleanup please contact:

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
Division of State Parks  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176  
573-522-6380 or 1-800-361-4827  
**Martin Kator**  
Environmental Scientist  
martin.kator@dnr.mo.gov

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 7  
11201 Renner Blvd.  
Lenexa, KS 66219  
913-551-7358  
**Jason Gunter**  
Project Manager  
gunter.jason@epa.gov

- ◆ For information on the sampling investigation please contact:

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
Superfund Section  
P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176  
573-751-7880 or 1-800-361-4827  
**Valerie Wilder**  
Chief, Superfund Site Assessment Unit  
valerie.wilder@dnr.mo.gov