

What is the BPRP?

The Basin Property Remediation Program (BPRP) involves the removal and replacement of 6-12 inches of contaminated soil/gravel from private and commercial properties along the Coeur d'Alene River drainage wherever contaminants are found, including areas from Mullan to Harrison, Idaho. Areas considered for remediation are generally defined by the boundaries established by the Institutional Controls Program (ICP).

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is currently implementing the BPRP as part of the Bunker Hill Superfund Site cleanup work in the Coeur d'Alene Basin. The remediation work is performed by private contractors under DEQ management and oversight.

Cleanup of residential properties began in the Bunker Hill Superfund Site Box in 1986. In 1989, cleanup began to focus on properties housing "high-risk" populations (children aged six and under or pregnant women). In 1994, Upstream Mining Group entered into a legal agreement to clean up at least 200 residential yards, all adjacent rights-of-way, and commercial properties each year. Between 2002 -2005, EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers took over some of the residential cleanup to maintain the pace and minimize the potential for recontamination. Cleanup of residential and commercial properties in the Box was completed by UMG in 2006.

Work remains to be done.

Sampling and remediation activities continue to be very important. *All* properties within the Bunker Hill Superfund Site need to be sampled and, if necessary, remediated so that the contamination can be effectively managed. Completion of the BPRP at the current level of effort will require 5-6 years. (See *BPRP Update* inside.)

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Basin Property Remediation Program (BPRP)



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Sampling Consent

Every year DEQ consultants perform door-to-door surveys in areas not yet sampled asking for permission to sample properties for the Bunker Hill Superfund Site BPRP. Residents may also contact DEQ to request sampling of their properties if they are occupied by “high-risk” populations.

“High-risk” populations are comprised of children six years of age or younger and/or pregnant women. Cleaning up properties inhabited by these populations is the BPRP’s highest priority.

Once access is granted, consultants collect soil samples from yards and water samples from well water sources and send the samples to a lab for Pb (lead) and As (arsenic) analysis. Landowners and tenants incur no cost for sampling.

Determining the Need for Cleanup

Sample data determine which properties require remediation.

- Properties that test over the action levels of 1,000 parts per million (ppm) for lead, or over 100 ppm for arsenic, require replacement of contaminated soils or gravel with clean materials.
- Properties with lead levels between 700 and 999 ppm may be “greened” by adding grass or gravel to enhance existing cover.

Results are mailed to homeowners, usually six to twelve months after the property was sampled, or sooner if the property is inhabited by a high-risk population, along with a recommended remediation, if needed.

Properties requiring remediation are placed on a standard or high-risk list of properties to be cleaned up.

The Cleanup Process

Once soil is known to be contaminated at a property, DEQ and its contractors work with property owners to determine how the cleanup work will be done.

Generally, the contaminated soil is removed down to a depth of 6-12 inches and taken to a contaminated waste soil repository. In some cases, a fabric barrier similar to an open-weave cheesecloth material is placed down before the clean soil to indicate where contaminated soil has been left behind.

A cover of clean topsoil or gravel is then placed on the barrier. The final step requires placing sod or grass seed on bare soil areas.



DEQ employees continue to work with property owners for 45 days after the property is cleaned up to ensure that the sod or grass seed is growing. DEQ also works with landowners on complaints. Once a property cleanup is completed, the ICP assists homeowners in managing the clean barrier.

The ICP is a locally enforced set of regulations designed to ensure the integrity of clean soil and other protective barriers placed over contaminants left in place throughout the Bunker Hill Superfund site.

Note: Landowners in the Superfund Site are required to work with the ICP if they want to dig on their properties regardless of whether the properties have been cleaned up.

BPRP Update

In 2009, DEQ and its contractors are kicking off another productive season of property cleanups to protect human health. The BPRP’s goal is to clean up 350 properties this season. About 20% are expected to be inhabited by high-risk populations.

2008 Construction Season Highlights

During the 2008 construction season, DEQ remediated 524 residential and commercial properties in the Basin through a cooperative agreement funded by EPA and the state of Idaho. Two local contractors (Stewart Contracting in Pinehurst and Ferguson Contracting of Kellogg) excavated 68,617 cubic yards of waste soils.

Contaminated soils were disposed of in the Big Creek Repository, which accepts waste soils from the BPRP and the ICP. During 2008, the BPRP deposited 8,129 truck loads and the ICP deposited 406 truck loads into the Big Creek Repository.

Sixty-five of the properties remediated in 2008 were occupied by high-risk populations. The total cost for the BPRP in 2008 was near \$14,000,000.

To complete the cleanups efficiently, the program emphasizes target areas starting in Mullan and working downstream. Cleanups of Upper Basin properties are being emphasized again this season.

The same two local contractors are doing the 2009 property cleanups.

