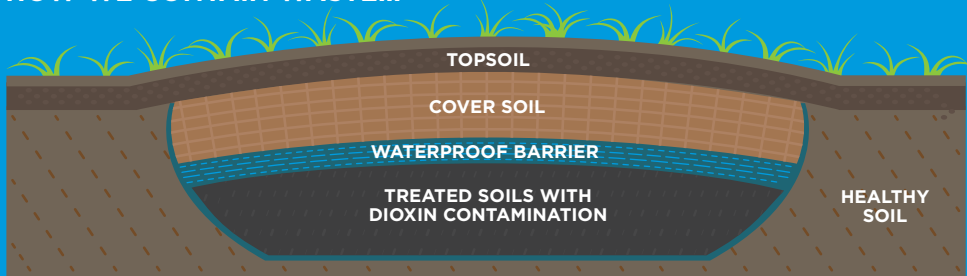


HOW DOES THIS NEW INFORMATION CHANGE THE CLEANUP PLAN FOR THE MONTANA POLE SITE?

DEQ is revising the cleanup plan to better protect the health and safety of surrounding communities.

DEQ is currently working on an Explanation of Significant Difference, a document that will detail the changes to the old plan, including new cleanup levels and approaches. The biggest change is that contaminated soils will now be contained under a lined cap, which will include at least one foot of fresh, clean soil. The cap prevents moisture from reaching the contaminated soils below, which prevents contamination from leaching into groundwater. This soil cap will protect people who enter the site, and who live or work nearby, at a safe level. DEQ is planning a public comment period for feedback, tentatively scheduled for August 2017.

HOW WE CONTAIN WASTE...



IS THERE REASON TO WORRY?

Revision of the cleanup plan is evidence of progress, not cause for alarm. Also, much of the visible work to date has involved short-term measures to protect people and the environment, such as fencing, and warning signage. This Five-Year Review's "no" determination regarding the original cleanup plan is not unusual for a Superfund cleanup site. Understanding of the science around protecting human health and our environment is constantly evolving. The technology we use to analyze our sites is evolving more rapidly than ever, and Federal regulations around certain contaminants shift and change as well. The Montana Pole cleanup will become more effective as we move into the future.

It's understandable to think cleanup should be near complete, given that the Butte community has seen work at the former plant for more than 20 years. Water and soil treatments, an engineered cap to cover the contaminated soil, and zoning regulations that prohibit residential or commercial development take time, but are well worth the effort to keep our communities safe.

AND WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE COMMUNITY, NOW AND IN THE FUTURE?

With a new plan for containing dioxin-contaminated soils, DEQ is already thinking ahead to how we can improve groundwater treatment. Continued data collection, combined with scientific and technological advances, will decrease cleanup costs and improve outcomes.

DEQ will keep the community and other stakeholders well informed at each step of the way. Our commitment is to perform effective and efficient cleanup and rehabilitation work, dedicated to protecting both the people in our communities and Montana's landscape for current and future generations.



MONTANA POLE AND TREATING PLANT FIVE-YEAR REVIEW REPORT

EPA Remedial Project Manager
Allie Archer
406.457.5033
Archer.Allie@epa.gov

DEQ Project Officer
David Bowers
406.444.6335
dbowers@mt.gov

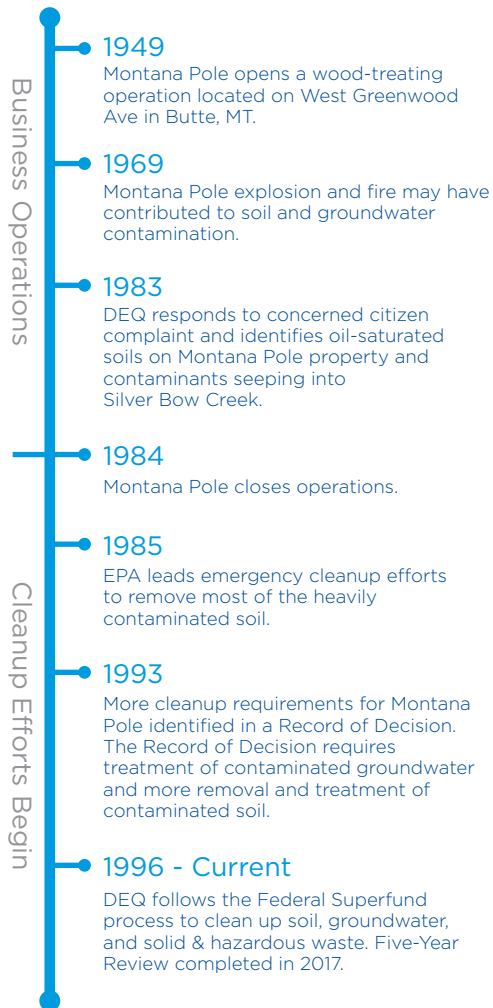
BACKGROUND ON THE MONTANA POLE AND TREATING PLANT SUPERFUND SITE

The Montana Pole and Treating Plant (Montana Pole) operated in Butte, Montana, from 1946 to 1984. The plant treated wood for industrial uses, such as telephone poles, bridge timbers and mine structures. For most of the plant's lifetime, pentachlorophenol (PCP) mixed with petroleum oil was added to the wood products to slow decay.

In 1983, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) responded to a complaint that an oily substance from the Montana Pole site was leaking into Silver Bow Creek. DEQ found PCP, petroleum, and dioxin contamination in the soil, creek, and groundwater. PCP and dioxins are known carcinogens that can harm people and wildlife.

An emergency cleanup, led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), excavated much of the soil to control the spread of contamination. To treat the groundwater and soil, a water treatment system and soil treatment area were built on site.

SITE TIMELINE



WHAT ARE THE RECORD OF DECISION AND FIVE-YEAR REVIEW REPORTS ISSUED BY DEQ AND EPA?

DEQ worked with EPA to develop a plan for ongoing soil and water treatment at Montana Pole. This plan is formally called the Record of Decision, and is required by the Federal Superfund cleanup process. Published in 1993, the Record of Decision must remain in place until cleanup meets regulatory levels safe for human health and the environment.

Five-year reviews provide an opportunity to evaluate if the cleanup is protective for human health and the environment. The report also informs the public about the status and progress of the cleanup, and if modifications are needed based on evolving science.



THE REPORT COVERS THREE MAIN QUESTIONS:

1. Is the cleanup plan working as intended?
2. Are cleanup levels still valid?
Are human health risks still properly accounted for?
3. Has new information or science come to light that could change the cleanup plan?



The purpose of these questions is to make sure Montanans understand the status of the cleanup and the measures that DEQ and other parties involved in the cleanup are taking to protect our communities—now, and for the long term.

WHAT WE FOUND IN THE FOURTH FIVE-YEAR REVIEW REPORT

The Five-Year Review found that, while most aspects of the cleanup plan have been successful, the dioxin soil cleanup level goal hasn't been reached. Although DEQ and its affiliates have removed and effectively treated PCP and petroleum contaminated soils, evolving science now shows that dioxins simply don't break down over time—even with the best biological land treatment practices in place. So the short answer is no – the cleanup is no longer functioning as the original Record of Decision intended.

In summary, this Five-Year Review functioned as it should: first, reviewing the cleanup to date and identifying that dioxins in the soils don't breakdown as expected; and second, identifying alternative plans to deal with those contaminants in ways that ensure long-term protection of human health and the environment.

SOIL: EXCAVATE, TREAT & PROTECT

- DEQ moved more than 200,000 cubic yards of Montana Pole contaminated soil through the Land Treatment Unit.
- Excavated soil treated and then returned to the excavated areas.
- Finally, treated soils will be capped with an engineered protective barrier.

