

April 2016 Newsletter

The purpose of this Newsletter is to provide interested stakeholders information on the Montana Pole and Treating Plant's remedial progress and to encourage public engagement. DEQ intends to issue these informational newsletters on a semi-annual basis.

Site Background

The Montana Pole and Treating Plant (MPTP) is located in Butte, Montana, and operated as a wood treating facility from 1946 to 1984. During most of this period, a solution of pentachlorophenol (PCP or Penta) was mixed with a petroleum carrier oil similar to diesel fuel, and used to preserve poles, posts, and bridge timbers.

In March 1983, a complaint was filed by a local citizen concerning oil seeping into Silver Bow Creek near the MPTP facility. The complaint was investigated and an oil seep directly down gradient from the MPTP facility was discovered. Further investigation identified oil-saturated soils on MPTP property and adjacent to the creek. Subsequent sampling confirmed the presence of different contaminants in site soils.

In July 1985, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Emergency Response Branch began a removal action on the site to minimize impacts to Silver Bow Creek and to stabilize the site.

Five Year Review

DEQ and EPA are presently conducting the 4th Five-Year review at MPTP. Previous MPTP Five-Year reviews have provided valuable feedback that has enabled DEQ to continue monitoring treatment approaches in an efficient manner, ensuring the project's progress. The intent of the 2016 Review is to detail the effectiveness of the remedial (cleanup) techniques being undertaken.

The completion deadline for this Five-Year review is the end of June 2016. At that time, this review will be publicly available. Aspects of this review process include: technical assessment, data collection, interviews, site inspections, and other pertinent activities. Based on the findings of the review, conclusions may include the identification of potential issues, recommendations and follow-up actions, and determination of whether the current remedy is, or is

expected to be, protective of human health and the environment.

Five-Year reviews comply with federal requirements and apply to sites where remedial actions result in waste remaining at the site. The purpose of the Review is for the agencies to determine whether the remedy at the site is, or upon completion will be, protective of human health and the environment. The objectives of the Five-Year reviews are to:

1. Analyze the remedy's various components to determine if those components are functioning as intended in the Record of Decision.
2. Analyze exposure assumptions, toxicity data, clean-up levels, and Remedial Action Objectives to determine if they are still valid, or if they require revision.
3. Determine if there is any new information that calls into question the protectiveness of the remedy.
4. Analyze any other concerns about the protectiveness of the remedy.

Make Plans to Attend the MPTP Open House

April 27, 2016

Silver Bow Fire Training Center

350 Josette

6 – 8 p.m.

Presentation begins at 7 p.m.

DEQ will host an Open House to discuss the MPTP facility. DEQ and their consultant, Tetra Tech, will provide information on the history of the site, current site status, conceptual design for closure of the land treatment unit, an in depth look at the Five-Year review, and plans for 2016 and beyond. Information stations will be set up to provide answers to questions and help interested members of the community learn more about MPTP.

Five-Year Review Interviews

Interviews play a key role in the development of our Five-Year review. People familiar with the MPTP site may have information that can help the review team decide if the remedial

alternatives are effective in protecting human health and the environment. These parties include: neighbors, organizational stakeholders, agency and government officials, community groups, and individuals. To date, 12 interviews have been conducted. DEQ wishes to obtain additional, substantive input from community members and other stakeholders about the MPTP Five Year Plan.

Design-Level Investigation/Protective Cap Design

The final removal of treated soils and placement into a secured area is scheduled for the 2017 construction season. DEQ has much work to do before next year, and keeping you informed is a top priority. We also want to ensure that the design for the final soil cap, which will be placed over the treated soils, is protective of human health and the environment, including preventing the potential leaching of any remaining contaminants to groundwater. A soil cap is being designed to mitigate potential exposure to contaminants by eliminating exposure pathways. Since ingestion is the primary pathway by which many MPTP contaminants become a threat to human health, placing a clean soil cap over the contaminated soils and maintaining the integrity of the cap has been determined to be an effective protective measure.

Design and Construction Schedule

DEQ completes draft Montana Pole Final soil disposal and soil cap design.	Summer 2016
Draft Montana Pole Final soil disposal and soil cap design reviewed by EPA.	Fall 2016
Final Montana Pole soil disposal and soil cap design out for bid.	Winter 2016/2017
Begin Construction.	Spring/Summer 2017

DEQ encourages interested stakeholders to engage in this process by contacting Jeni Flatow (406-444-6469) or David Bowers (406-444-6335) by April 27th to schedule an interview time.

DEQ is interested in hearing from any stakeholder who may wish to discuss topics pertinent to the site, such as:

- Broken fences, unusual odors, dead plants, or materials leaving the site;
- Site reuse possibilities;
- Unusual activities at the site such as dumping, vandalism, or trespassing;
- How cleanup at the site has benefited or encumbered the neighborhood.



Mule deer now winter on the Montana Pole Site. The whitetail deer in the picture had been hit by a car on the freeway, but survived and took up residence with the mule deer on site. It is rare to see a whitetail in Butte. The multiple species of wildlife frequently witnessed at the site are an indication that the area has become attractive to wildlife again; however, much work is left to be done.

For More Information

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New Project Officer

DEQ is pleased to announce that a new team member is joining the MPTP project. David Bowers will be assisting long-time project manager Lisa DeWitt with many of the duties and responsibilities at the Montana Pole site. David has been with DEQ for 15 years, working on remediation (cleanup) projects that include Brewery Flats in Lewistown (an old railyard and roundhouse that is now a natural area along Big Spring Creek), CMC Bozeman (an old asbestos plant and recycling business that now includes the site of the Bozeman Public Library on Main St.), and the Upper Blackfoot Mining Complex east of Lincoln (a site containing multiple old mines and a large tailings impoundment contaminating the headwaters of the Blackfoot River).

David brings technical expertise, as well as experience working with various community groups and other stakeholders, to the MPTP site. We are happy to welcome David to this project.

Please feel free to contact David at 406-444-6335 or dbowers@mt.gov.

Pre-construction actions at the site have included stockpiling clean soil that will be screened and separated from the large rocks. The stockpile came from the interstate construction project that occurred a few years ago.



Rock screening activities separate rock from soil. The rock will be used for the Silver Bow Creek Restoration, while the soil will serve as a cap to cover the treated soil that will be removed from the land treatment unit.

One of the activities that occurred this spring at the MPTP site was the abandonment of several monitoring wells. Water treatment activities at the site have shown marked improvement over the years, and many formerly useful data sources such as the monitoring well shown at right, were removed.





Montana Department of Environmental Quality

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For More Information

DEQ encourages an educated and engaged public. To learn more about the cleanup at the Montana Pole and Treatment Plant, please visit the following resources for documents related to the Site:

- <http://deq.mt.gov/Land/fedsuperfund/mtpole>
- The Citizens Technical Environmental Committee of Butte
27 W. Park.
Butte, MT 59701
<http://www.buttectec.org/>
Hours: M-F 1:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
- Montana Tech University Library
1300 W Park St, Butte, MT 59701
Phone: 496-4281
Hours: 7:30 a.m.-10 p.m.

To join the MPTP email list, please go to:

<http://svc.mt.gov/deq/ListServe/MTPoleStep1.asp>

To be added to our hard copy mailing list, please contact Joann Wiggins at 406-444-6795 or via email at jwiggins@mt.gov.