



EPA

ANACONDA / YERINGTON MINE

U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY • REGION 9 • JULY 2005

Yerington, Nevada

UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES PUBLIC MEETING AUGUST 3

Greetings from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This fact sheet is an update on the Anaconda/Yerington Mine investigation and cleanup. It summarizes actions that have occurred since our last comprehensive mailing earlier this year and announces a public meeting set for Wednesday, August 3 (see details below). If you have questions or comments on this fact sheet or site work in general, please do not hesitate to contact any of the staff listed at the end of this newsletter.

COMMUNITY MEETING

Wednesday, August 3, 2005

7:00 p.m.

**Weed Heights Community Center
Yerington, Nevada**

EPA will host a public meeting to update the community on current and future site activities and to hear directly from residents. We look forward to seeing you there and welcome your participation at this meeting.

Results of "Scanner Van" Survey

EPA's radiological "scanner van" from our laboratory in Las Vegas surveyed the mine site, nearby areas and the City of Yerington this past April. Its purpose was to detect gamma radiation, specifically "abnormally" high amounts that might be associated with mine materials. A "background" level of radiation was established against which to compare the areas surveyed. The following areas were surveyed: the mine site; MacArthur Pit and Haul Road; the Wabuska rail spur; the Yerington Paiute reservation; Mesa and Sunset Hills Dr. area; Luzier Lane and

Valley View Estates; Weed Heights and access roads; locations in Mason Valley; Yerington and adjacent roadways; and Schurz and roadways to the southeast.

Results of the survey showed significantly higher gamma radiation in certain areas of the mine site itself (portions of the milling and ore processing area and evaporation ponds), but no unusual high readings in any of the surrounding areas. The only readings higher than background were associated with the presence of naturally occurring radioactive material in rock outcrops or roadcuts.

Although this scan was not meant to be a comprehensive radiological survey, it did provide valuable screening information which will be helpful in any further investigation. Copies of the Scanner Van Survey work plan and final report are available for review in the Lyon County Library.

Site Security

With help from members of the community concerned about gaps in security at the site, new and upgraded fencing is on the way. The result will be a completely enclosed mine site. The Atlantic Richfield Company (ARC) has begun adding fencing to the perimeters as well as upgrading existing fencing for both safety and security reasons. ARC

will add fencing to the southern boundary at the base of the waste rock piles along Boatwright Lane. In the center portion of the site, ARC is evaluating moving the existing recessed fencing closer to the roadway in the processing area along Burch Drive. New signs advising of on-site hazards and telling people to keep out have been installed. Through BLM's process for the closure of public lands within the property boundary, trespassers may be fined \$1,000.00. In addition, EPA has directed ARC to improve fencing around areas with known physical and/or chemical hazards and to provide on-site security staff seven days a week during daylight hours. EPA is awaiting ARC's response in the near future.

Air Monitoring

Monitoring the air on site and at the site perimeter for total particulate matter and lead has begun. Monitoring for metals and radiological contaminants is under discussion between EPA and ARC. EPA has directed ARC to add metals and radiological contaminants to the sampling and is awaiting ARC's response in the near future.

Groundwater Monitoring

Monitoring of the groundwater both on site and to the north of the site boundary will be increased. The purpose of this monitoring is to track whether contamination from the mine has migrated off site. ARC has begun installing monitoring wells at 16 locations primarily north of the mine site with a few at the sound end. Installation is expected to be completed by fall with the first results due by the end of the year. These new wells will be added to those already being monitored to obtain a more complete picture of the groundwater in the area.

Domestic Well Sampling

ARC is continuing to sample domestic wells for radiation at residents' request. The quarterly sampling will be maintained for those well owners who have uranium exceedences above the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) or drinking water standard. Those residents also have the option of receiving bottled water from ARC.

Reevaluating Existing Systems

It is important to prevent as much contamination as possible from possibly moving off the mine site in the short term while we determine what will need to be done for the long term. As part of that site control, EPA must make sure the current control systems are working as intended. The pumpback and fluid management systems designed to control groundwater and surface liquids from the site are being reevaluated and upgraded as necessary. ARC has provided EPA with a draft work plan describing how they would operate and maintain the existing system. They have proposed maintaining the current pumpback system and associated groundwater monitoring as was done previously. Regarding the Arimetco fluids management system, they have proposed operating it similar to the way the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection did but would not use evaporative sprayers to reduce fluid volume. Instead, they would "store" the collected fluids in one additional heap leach pad (a pile of rocks leached by acid solutions that sits on a pad with a protective liner beneath) if the volume increases due to rain or snow. Currently, one heap leach pad is being used to contain the fluids. This method would be used until a more permanent solution is developed. EPA will provide comments on ARC's draft work plan within the next few weeks.

Processing Area

A large amount of information on groundwater and soil was collected this past winter. The first of several data summaries will be provided to the regulatory agencies for screening to determine what types of maps and presentation format would work best for handling this data. After evaluating the analytical results, maps will be prepared to show three-dimensional distribution of the contaminants so as to better understand the nature and extent of the contamination. The summaries and maps will be presented in a data report later this year.

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to Visit Yerington

Representatives from ATSDR's Atlanta headquarters will be in Yerington the week of the August 3 public meeting. Two availability sessions to meet the ATSDR team and let them hear your health concerns which might be related to the mine site will be held on: Tuesday, August 2, 2-8 p.m., Yerington Paiute Tribal Offices, 171 Campbell Lane and Thursday, August 4, 2-8 p.m., Lyon County Library, 20 Nevin Way in Yerington. For further information on ATSDR's visit, please contact: Libby Vianu, ATSDR, 75 Hawthorne St., Suite 100, San Francisco, CA 94105, (415) 947-4319, vianu.libby@epa.gov

Information Repository

Site reports and other information continue to be added to the site repository at the following location:

Lyon County Library
20 Nevin Way
Yerington, NV 89447
(775) 577-5042



Hours:
Mon, Wed, Fri—9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Tues, Thurs—9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
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Mailing List Coupon

If you are not already on the Anaconda/Yerington Mine mailing list and would like to be, please fill out the coupon below and return to:

Vicki Rosen, Community Involvement Coordinator
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You may also provide the above information via e-mail to: rosen.vicki@epa.gov

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• PUBLIC MEETING AUGUST 3 •

For Further Information

If you have questions or concerns about the Anaconda/Yerington Mine, please feel free to contact any of the following people:

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You may also reach Jim or Vicki by leaving a message on EPA's toll-free line: (800) 231-3075. You will receive a return call as soon as possible. EPA website: www.epa.gov/region09/waste/sfund

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