



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
Panhandle Health District



# *Healthy Living in the Silver Valley and Coeur d'Alene Basin*

April 2013  
EPA 910-K-13-003

**T**he Silver Valley and the Coeur d'Alene Basin are great places to live, work, and play. Knowing the facts about our area will help keep you and your family safe and healthy. Since the late 1800's, the Silver Valley has been a major mining area and one of the largest silver producing areas of the world. Past mining practices left behind metals like lead and arsenic in the environment.

Cleanup has been under way since the 1980s. Together, we have made great progress in reducing risks.

For example, over 6,000 properties have been cleaned up in the Box and Upper and Lower Basin (see map). Properties include residential, commercial, and public properties such as parks and school grounds.

However, lead and other metals remain in areas like hillsides, some river beaches and floodplains, and other recreational areas.

This brochure suggests practical tips on how to further reduce lead exposure and safely enjoy this beautiful environment.

***Look inside for tips, to-do's, and resources.***

## Facts About Lead

- In our area, lead from past mining practices is typically found in:
  - soil on hillsides in the “Box” and around old mill sites in the Basin
  - soil on the floodplain and beaches along the South Fork and the Coeur d’Alene River
  - dirt tracked into vehicles or into the home from these areas
  - soil underneath clean soil caps (usually 1 foot deep), under foundations and in dirt basements
  - unkept ventilation systems, insulation, and attic spaces which collected contaminated dust from the 1980’s
- Lead was once used in gasoline.
- Lead can be present in paint produced before 1978.
- Some toys and ceramics may contain lead.
- Lead is taken into the body primarily by swallowing it.
- Swallowing even small amounts of lead (less than a quarter teaspoon of contaminated dust or soil) can harm a child.
- Young children crawling on the ground and putting hands in their mouths have the most risk.
- There is no safe amount of lead in the body.

### Why Lead Poses a Risk

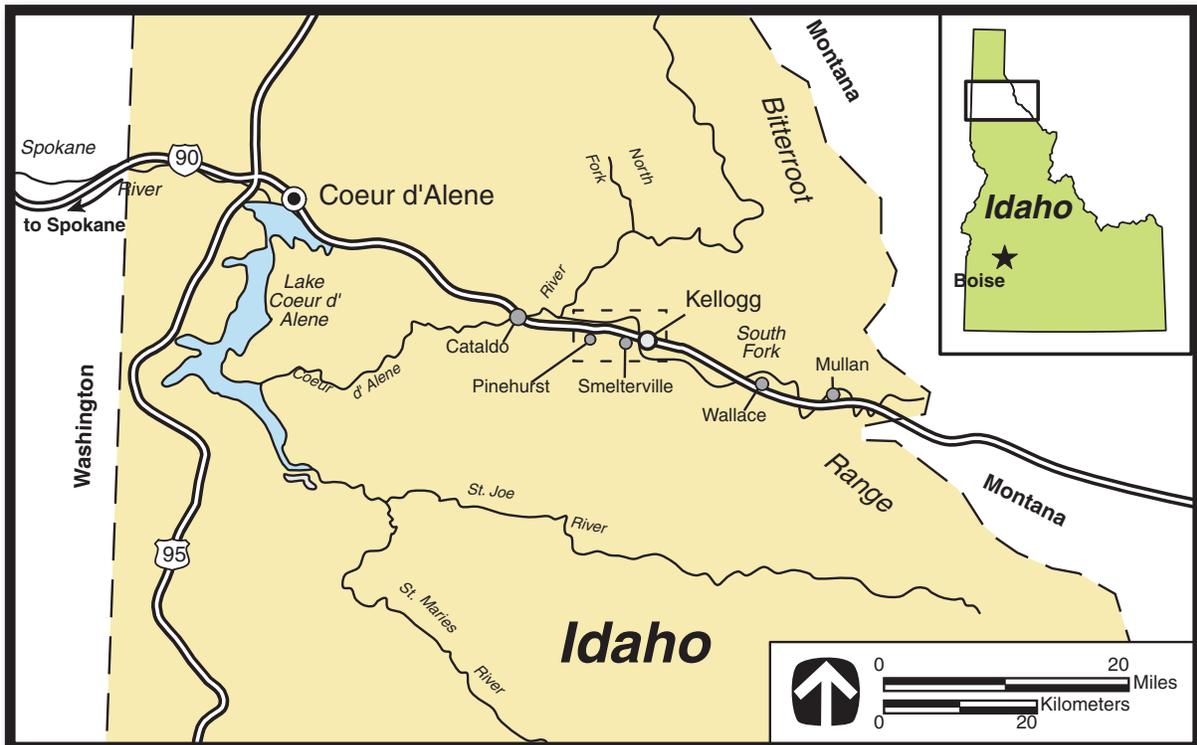
Lead is most dangerous to young children, pregnant women, and unborn children.

It can cause learning disabilities, behavioral problems and slower growth.

Lead can pose a risk to adults, too, causing memory loss, irritability, high blood pressure and muscle or joint pain.

For more information, visit the Panhandle Health District’s web page at

 [www.phd1.idaho.gov/institutional/lead.cfm](http://www.phd1.idaho.gov/institutional/lead.cfm)



*The Bunker Hill Superfund Site covers parts of northern Idaho and eastern Washington*

# Keep Clean, Eat Clean, Play Clean!

## Keep Clean

- Keep floors washed and vacuumed.
- Remove household dust by damp dusting.
- Remove shoes before entering your home.
- Purchase clean sand for sandboxes and clean soil for landscaping.
- Wash toys, bottles and pacifiers if they have been in contact with dust or dirt.
- Promptly wash dusty or dirty outdoor clothes. Don't wear them around the house.

## Eat Clean

- Wash hands and face before eating.
- Eat at a clean table. Throw away any food dropped on the ground.
- Drink, cook or wash only with water from home or an approved source. Do not use river water.
- Don't eat wild plants from the flood plain, river or lake areas.
- Feed your kids a healthy diet rich in iron and calcium.

## Play Clean

- Play in grassy areas and places that have been cleaned up.
- Steer clear of areas with soil that won't grow grass, like mounded dirt and hillsides.
- Wash hands after contact with the soil.
- Have children play in grassy areas away from loose soil, dust and muddy areas. No mud pies!
- Don't remove or take home any soil or plants.
- Remove loose soil from your clothes, shoes, camping equipment, toys, ATVs and pets prior to heading home. Keep soiled items in a plastic bag and wash them separately.



*Riley Raccoon says, "Keep Clean, Eat Clean, Play Clean."  
Riley helps Panhandle Health District spread the word about  
playing safe in an area with historical mining contamination.*

## The Cleanup

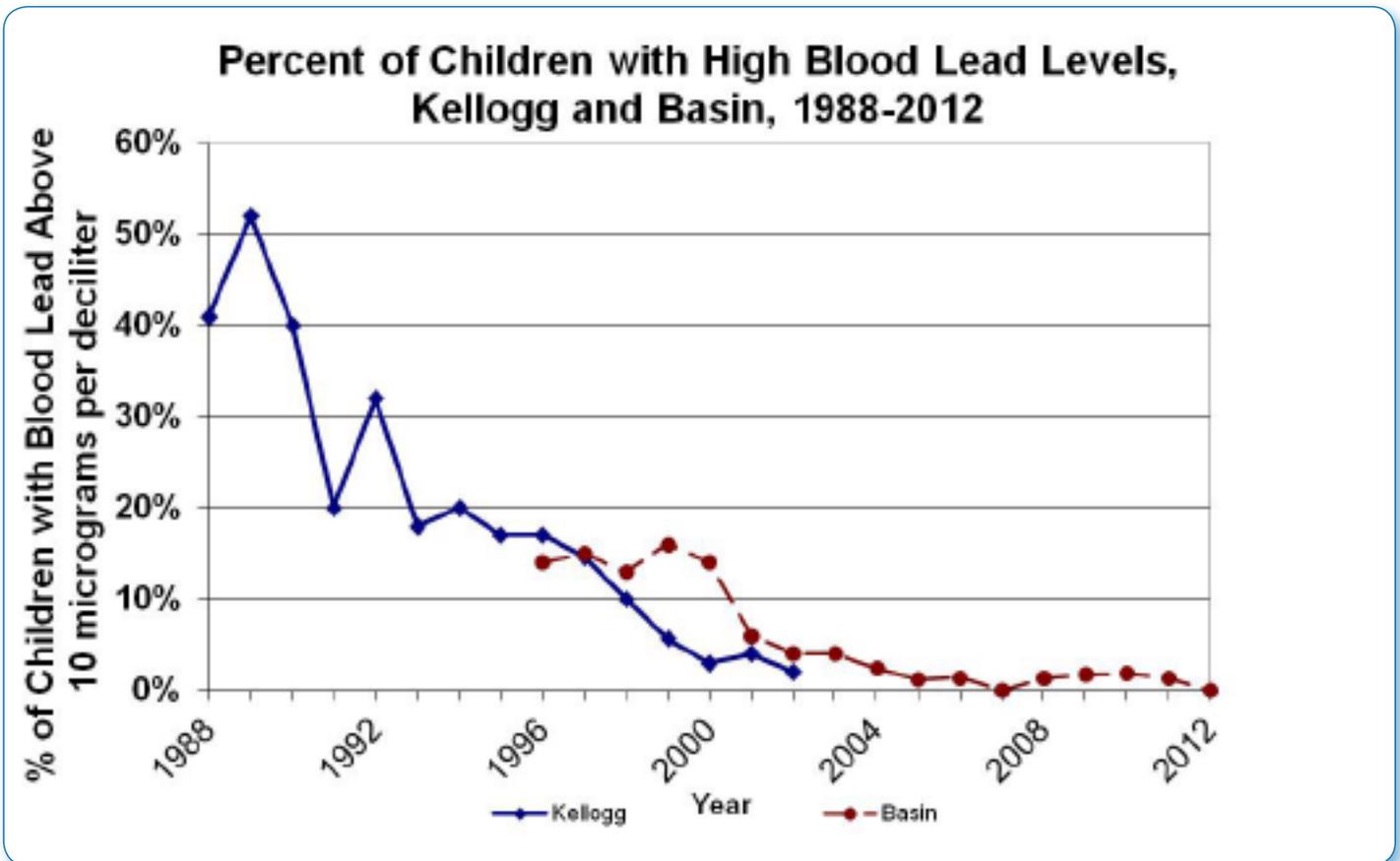
In 1983, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) listed the “Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical Complex” as a Superfund site. The project area covers parts of northern Idaho and eastern Washington. It is made up of the original 21 square mile “Box” and contaminated areas in the “Coeur d’Alene Basin.”

EPA, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Panhandle Health District (PHD), the Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission (BEIPC), and the Coeur d’Alene Tribe are making great progress meeting cleanup goals. Many other federal, state, and local agencies, environmental groups, and local community members are also involved.

The cleanup team’s first priority is to protect human health. Environmental studies found that dirt, dust, and sediments are the main sources of community lead exposure.

Workers test soil in people’s yards, playgrounds, parks, commercial properties, recreation areas, street rights of way and other areas. Where soils test above action levels, the primary cleanup method for residential properties is to remove and replace the top 12 inches of soil or place a clean 12 inch cap, often called a barrier. The removed soils are trucked to repositories to be safely managed and contained. Because lead and arsenic remain under the clean cap, the Panhandle Health District runs the Institutional Controls Program (ICP) to protect and maintain barriers to exposure (see next page). Workers also test private drinking water wells.

Property cleanups are complete in the Box and ongoing in the Basin. Soil replacement, community health awareness, and the ICP (see below) are all working together to protect community health. Since the cleanup began, children’s average blood lead levels have dropped sharply (see graph).



*Coeur d’Alene Basin Blood Lead Levels. Kellogg Panhandle Health District. 2012.*

## What's Going On Now?

- Continuing residential and commercial property cleanup
- Starting contaminated groundwater collection and treatment
- Cleaning up some recreational areas along the Spokane River
- Developing plans to address recreational and wildlife areas in the Lower Basin
- Managing the local Institutional Controls Program
- Addressing contaminated paved and unpaved non-federal public roads
- Cleaning up mine waste at non-operating mine and mill sites in the Upper Basin
- Taking steps to keep cleaned up areas clean
- Providing and operating repositories to safely secure waste soils
- Continuing public outreach and education

## What You Can Do

### Have Your Child's Blood Lead Tested

The only way to know your child's blood lead level is to test it. Each summer, Panhandle Health District offers free blood lead testing for young children. PHD also provides free, private consultations on how to reduce exposures at home. For information, call 208-783-0707.

### Consult with your Health Care Provider

Pregnant women, talk to your health care provider early about ways to avoid the risk of lead exposure.

### Get Your Yard Tested

Contact DEQ for information about getting your yard soil tested: 208-783-5781.

### Follow the Institutional Controls Program (ICP)

Community members help keep contamination in check by following the ICP. The ICP is a locally enforced set of regulations to control re-contamination. It is operated by PHD. Permits are needed for many types of indoor and outdoor construction activities. ICP permits and consultations are free. Some information is online at [http://bit.ly/Panhandle\\_Health](http://bit.ly/Panhandle_Health)

The ICP provides information and guidance through its permitting program on how to safely manage soils with high concentrations of metals. The ICP also provides a location to safely dispose of soils with elevated metals concentrations.

Remember, you must comply with the ICP before digging on your property or starting some interior projects. For details, call ☎ 208-783-0707.

### **Panhandle Health District Offers Information and Access to Vacuums**

The PHD office at 114 W Riverside in Kellogg offers helpful information.

Topics include local lead exposures, how to reduce risks, how lead affects the body, and information about buying and selling property in the area.

PHD also loans vacuum cleaners to residents. Frequent vacuuming often reduces in-home exposure. For Information, call 208-783-0707.



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## Information for Property Owners

The Institutional Controls Program tracks completed cleanups, sampling results, and property improvements. Records are commonly requested prior to land sales and loan refinancing.

☎ Call 208-783-0707.

Lead contaminated soil is part of federal lead disclosure requirements. Learn more:

- *Guidelines for Property Owners Affected by Mine Waste Within the Bunker Hill Superfund Site* is available at:

📄 <http://bit.ly/propowner>

This document helps property owners understand possible Superfund liability for mining related waste on properties in the area. Contact Anne McCauley, EPA ☎ 206-553-4689.

- To learn about obligations to disclose before the purchase and lease of housing built before 1978 and located within the Bunker Hill Superfund Site, download a brochure at:

📄 [www.phd1.idaho.gov/institutional/documents/LeadSoil\\_000.pdf](http://www.phd1.idaho.gov/institutional/documents/LeadSoil_000.pdf).

The brochure is called *Lead Contaminated Soil – Residential Real Estate Transaction Disclosure Requirements: Information for Owners, Landlords & Sellers, Buyers, and Renters, Real Estate Agents*. It defines “lead based paint hazard” and “soil lead hazard.” It also lists the obligations of the seller, landlord, and real estate agent.

For a hard copy, call EPA at  
☎ 800-424-4372 or 206-553-1200.

For questions, call Barbara Ross at  
☎ 800-424-4372 Ext. 1985 or 206-553-1985.

Idaho state law requires certain disclosures by seller/owners of residential property and real estate brokers and salespersons regarding the condition of certain real property.

- Idaho Code Sections 55-2501 through 2518, the “Idaho Property Disclosure Act,” requires seller/owners of residential real property to disclose the known presence of hazardous materials or substances to prospective buyers.
- Idaho Code Sections 54-2086 and 54-2087 of the “Idaho Real Estate License Law,” requires real estate brokers and salespersons to disclose all adverse material facts actually known or which reasonably should have been known about the real estate to buyer/seller customers and clients.

- If you have any questions about these requirements, these laws should be carefully reviewed. The widely known and publicized presence of lead and other heavy metals in soils found throughout the Silver Valley/Coeur d’Alene Basin are hazardous materials or adverse material facts, which can require disclosure.



## Learn More and Get Involved

**Rene Gilbert**, EPA Community Liaison

☎ 208-659-5237

✉ [gilbert.maureen@epa.gov](mailto:gilbert.maureen@epa.gov)

**Andrea Lindsay**, EPA Community Involvement

☎ 800-424-4372, ext. 1896

✉ [lindsay.andrea@epa.gov](mailto:lindsay.andrea@epa.gov)

**Denna Grangaard**, DEQ Public Outreach Analyst

☎ 208-783-5781

✉ [denna.grangaard@deq.idaho.gov](mailto:denna.grangaard@deq.idaho.gov)

**Attend the Citizens' Coordinating Council**

meetings. This citizen's forum is the main avenue for public input into Basin Commission activities. For details, contact Jerry Boyd, CCC Chair,

☎ 509-455-6039

✉ [www.basincommission.com/CCC.asp](http://www.basincommission.com/CCC.asp)

**Join our mailing list!**

EPA sends out updates and information about the cleanup a few times a year. To join, fill out and mail the form on the back of this document.

**Participate in the Lower Basin Collaborative.**

This citizen group came together to learn more about cleanup issues in the Lower Basin, discuss possibilities and impacts, and weigh in on cleanup options.

✉ <http://lowerbasincollaborative.wordpress.com>

**Read the Basin Bulletin**

EPA publishes the Basin Bulletin three times a year. It gives updates on the Superfund cleanup in the Coeur d'Alene Basin. For more information about the Bulletin, call: ☎ Andrea Lindsay at 800-424-4372, ext.1896 or visit ✉ <http://go.usa.gov/4Z45>.

## Contacts

(Contacts may change over time. These contacts are based on staffing as of January 2013.)

**Bill Adams**, EPA, Seattle

☎ 800-424-4372 ext. 2806 ✉ [adams.bill@epa.gov](mailto:adams.bill@epa.gov)

**Ed Moreen**, EPA, Coeur d'Alene

☎ 208-664-4588 ✉ [moreen.ed@epa.gov](mailto:moreen.ed@epa.gov)

**Rob Hanson**, DEQ, Boise

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**Bruce Schuld**, DEQ, Kellogg

☎ 208-783-5781 ✉ [schuld.bruce@deq.idaho.gov](mailto:schuld.bruce@deq.idaho.gov)

**Jerry Cobb**, Panhandle Health District

☎ 208-783-0707 ✉ [jcobb@phd1.idaho.gov](mailto:jcobb@phd1.idaho.gov)

**Terry Harwood**, Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission

☎ 208-783-2528 ✉ [terry.harwood@deq.idaho.gov](mailto:terry.harwood@deq.idaho.gov)

## Web Resources

**Panhandle Health District**

[www.phd1.idaho.gov/institutional/institutionalindex.cfm](http://www.phd1.idaho.gov/institutional/institutionalindex.cfm)

**Idaho Department of Environmental Quality**

[www.deq.idaho.gov/bunkerhillssuperfundsite](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/bunkerhillssuperfundsite)

**Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission**

[www.basincommission.com](http://www.basincommission.com)

**US Environmental Protection Agency**

EPA – Coeur d'Alene Basin  
[yosemite.epa.gov/r10/cleanup.nsf/sites/bh](http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/cleanup.nsf/sites/bh)

EPA – Lead Health Information  
[www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead)

EPA on Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/cdabasin](http://www.facebook.com/cdabasin)



Region 10  
1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900, ETPA-081  
Seattle, Washington 98101-3140  
April 2013

Pre-Sorted Standard  
Postage and Fees Paid  
U.S. EPA  
Permit No. G-35  
Seattle, WA



Riley says,  
*Keep Clean,  
Eat Clean,  
Play Clean!*

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the Silver Valley and  
Coeur d'Alene Basin**

**Read inside for details**

### Want updates on the environmental cleanup?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sends out cleanup updates and information a few times a year. If you would like to be on the mailing list, please fill out this form, clip it and mail it in a stamped envelope to the address at the bottom of the form. Or, email your request to  [lindsay.andrea@epa.gov](mailto:lindsay.andrea@epa.gov)



Name			
Email			
Organization			
Address			
City			
State		Zip	
Send this form to:	Andrea Lindsay EPA Region 10, Suite 900 1200 Sixth Avenue, ETPA-081 Seattle, WA 98101		