



Ironwood Manufactured Gas Plant (MGP) Q&As

If during the cleanup project you have questions or concerns, please contact EPA Project Managers Kathy Halbur & Jacob Hassan at 906-932-5050, extension 124.

EPA Cleanup

How long will it take to clean-up the site?

EPA expects the clean-up to last 2-3 months.

Will the ATV Trail be accessible during the project?

The ATV Trail will be accessible during the clean-up. However, the southern access to the trail via Hemlock will be closed until construction is complete. The northern Hemlock Street access and the Lawrence Street access will remain open throughout the project. Please use one of these other access points until the clean-up is complete.

What should I expect during the clean-up?

During the clean-up there will be a lot of heavy machinery removing large amounts of contaminated soil. The contaminated soil may produce a “mothball” or “tar” smell. EPA has developed a plan to minimize any odors or dust from leaving the site. Also, there will be a lot of truck traffic along Hemlock Street throughout the day. The trucks will be transporting contaminated soil to the landfill as well as bringing in clean soil to restore the site.

Will the City water and sewer project be impacted by the Ironwood MGP site clean-up?

EPA’s removal action at the Ironwood MGP Site will not impact the City of Ironwood’s construction project in the area. EPA is coordinating closely with the City and the City’s contractors regarding schedule, traffic routes, paving, etc.

How do you plan to manage the air quality during removal activities?

During the project, EPA will monitor the air for particulate concentrations and the levels of carbon monoxide (CO), hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and percent oxygen (%O₂) in the air around the perimeter of the Site. EPA will monitor the air quality closely and carry out engineering controls to minimize any off-site releases.

How will the site be used in the future?

At this point, EPA and City officials are still discussing how the site will be used after the cleanup is completed. Some future use restrictions will be placed on the property, such as no residential development. EPA is currently planning to restore the property to recreational green space.

How do I get project updates?

Please visit:

www.epa.gov/region5/cleanup/ironwood

www.epaos.org/ironwoodmcp

Health

Can the coal tar harm my health?

Coal tar is made of many different chemicals. These chemicals include PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons) and VOCs (volatile organic chemicals). Touching or having contact with coal tar can cause skin irritation or redness. These are temporary effects.

If you do get coal tar on your skin (from contact with the soil or sheen in the river), wash it off with a mild soap and water as soon as possible. Avoid contact with the coal tar when you can.

You may also smell an asphalt/gasoline/mothball-like odor from these chemicals. This odor may be irritating for people, especially those with respiratory conditions, like asthma.

More information about PAHs at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tfacts69.html>

What about long-term health effects?

A lot of the coal tar material was buried in the soil at the site, but people would only have had a small amount of contact with coal tar on the surface of the soil. This small amount of contact is not expected to cause any long-term health effects. As part of the cleanup of the site, this material will be removed, which will prevent any future exposure.

Drinking Water

Can coal tar waste affect my drinking water?

Chemicals present in the coal tar were not found in municipal or private residential drinking water. Municipal drinking water is regularly tested for many chemicals, including those found in the coal tar.