



## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN

### North Ridge Estates Asbestos Removal Site Klamath Falls, Oregon

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed this plan to encourage community involvement during the cleanup of asbestos contamination at North Ridge Estates. This plan identifies opportunities for involvement, community concerns and information needs.

EPA is developed this plan in collaboration with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS). Ongoing interviews and discussions with individuals and groups from the community are an important part of this planning effort. If you have questions about the project, this plan, or would like additional information, please call, Judy Smith, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, (503) 326-6994, or e-mail her at [smith.judy@epa.gov](mailto:smith.judy@epa.gov) or Dan Heister, On-scene Coordinator, (503) 326-6869, [heister.dan@epa.gov](mailto:heister.dan@epa.gov).

*North Ridge Estates is a residential area located about three miles north of Klamath Falls, Oregon. North Ridge Estates is located on the site of the former Marine Recuperation Barracks facility, built in 1944 by the United States Department of Defense. EPA, DEQ and DHS are working to reduce resident's exposure to asbestos containing materials remaining at the site following demolition of structures.*

#### EPA Community Involvement Plan

EPA uses several tools to keep the community informed and involved in the cleanup activities at North Ridge Estates. The level of community interest is closely monitored and activities will be conducted as appropriate. EPA welcomes additional suggestions from community members.

**E-mail and Telephone Contacts:** You can find contact information for EPA, DEQ and ODHS staff in the box on page 2 of this plan. EPA will send brief e-mail updates to the project e-mail list on a regular basis and will respond promptly to incoming phone calls and e-mail messages. Contact the Community Involvement Coordinator to be added to or removed from the e-mail list.

**Web Sites:** The following internet sites provide a valuable source of information including meeting notes, pollution reports (POLREPS), background documents and other site information:

EPA - <http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/cleanup.nsf/sites/NRE>

DEQ – [www.deq.state.or.us/er/NorthRidge.htm](http://www.deq.state.or.us/er/NorthRidge.htm)

DHS - [www.dhs.state.or.us/publichealth/superfund/nrsite.cfm](http://www.dhs.state.or.us/publichealth/superfund/nrsite.cfm)

**Public Meetings:** EPA holds meetings to provide new or updated information about the North Ridge Estates cleanup and gather your feedback throughout the process. Public meetings will be announced by e-mail and news releases sent to the Klamath Falls Herald and News as well as local radio and television outlets.

**Information Repository:** The information repository provides a convenient community location for public review of information. EPA will place technical documents and reports at the Klamath Falls Public Library located at 126 S. Third St, Klamath Falls OR 97601. From August 8 to September 8, 2003, the Administrative Record was placed at the information repository for public review and comment.

**On-site Flyer Box:** When work is underway at North Ridge Estates, information for residents may be left in a flyer box located by the door of the EPA command trailer located at the Memorial Park off Old Fort Road.

**Fact Sheets:** Fact sheets summarizing key information may be developed when needed and will be distributed by e-mail, surface mail and posting to the web page.

**Public Comment Opportunities:** A public comment opportunity was held from August 8 to September 23, 2003 for review of the administrative record for the site to date. Since EPA accepted the site from DEQ in May 2003, we have gathered informal comments during numerous meetings and personal contacts.

Because of the high level of interest in obtaining plans, agreements and sampling data and results early in the process, EPA is following these guidelines for sharing documents and data from the site:

**Sharing preliminary documents:** Residents and other interested parties have indicated they would like to see preliminary documents that contractors for MBK Partnership provided to EPA. EPA will use established e-mail lists to inform people when documents become available, and will place them in the information repository. When electronic versions are available they will be posted on the

EPA website. The On-scene Coordinator will meet with individual residents to share information and gather feedback about their properties.

**Sharing preliminary sampling data:** Residents and other interested people have indicated they would like to see air and soil sampling results as soon as possible. EPA, DEQ, DHS and ATSDR understand the importance of sharing sampling information with the community. Data will be shared as soon as the laboratory makes sure it is valid and the appropriate agency analyzes and interprets the results.

**For more information, contact:**

**EPA**

Judy Smith, Community Involvement Coordinator,  
(503) 326-6994

Dan Heister, On-Scene Coordinator  
(503) 326-6869

Mark MacIntyre, Media and Legislative Relations  
(206) 553-7302

**DEQ:**

Cliff Walkey, Air Quality Specialist  
(541) 388-6146 Ext. 224  
Frank Messina, Air Quality Specialist,  
(541) 388-6146

**DHS (SHINE program):**

Janice Panichello, Program Coordinator, (503)  
731-4025 Ext. 229

David Stone, Toxicologist,  
Amanda Guay, Public Health Educator, (503)  
731-4025 Ext 318

**Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR):**

Karen Larson, Toxicologist  
(206) 553-6978

## Community Concerns

EPA has become aware of issues and concerns important to property owners through meetings, phone calls, community interviews, e-mail messages, and personal contacts. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) have briefed EPA about the site and community related concerns. DEQ initially responded to the site during May 2001, and DHS who released a preliminary public health consultation for the site in April 2003.

EPA participated in a public meeting hosted by DEQ on January 16, 2003 and a public meeting hosted by DHS on May 8, 2003. EPA hosted public meetings on June 4 and October 30, 2003. EPA and other agency representatives also met with groups of homeowners in their homes by request on May 8 and 9 and June 3 and 4, and July 23, 2003. We will continue to meet with individuals and groups and hold additional public meetings as needed during the cleanup.

Primary concerns shared by virtually everyone EPA talked with were:

- **Human health - Keeping safe from exposure to asbestos**
- **Property value** - Maintaining the value of housing and property investment
- **Quality of life** – Residents should be able to enjoy their home and property
- **Accountability** - Making the responsible party pay for cleanup

Residents were sharply divided between two visions of an outcome for the site:

- Some residents want the site cleaned up so they can stay on their property and enjoy it without fear of risk to their health from asbestos fibers.
- Some residents want to move elsewhere because they have lost the enjoyment and ability to be safe in their homes. They either want the site cleaned up so their property can be sold at a fair market price or be compensated for the value of their property so they can move elsewhere.
- A few people remain neutral and will watch cleanup efforts at the site.

Specific concerns included:

- What cleanup method will be used?
- Level of cleanup (Will ALL of the asbestos be removed)?
- Pits of buried asbestos containing material are located all over and need to be dug up.
- MBK picked up the surface once, but more material is coming to the surface.
- Is surface pickup cost effective? Pieces aren't the health risk, it's the fibers released over time by weathering.
- If the soil is contaminated, why waste EPA resources?
- Would like to see individual sampling in homes, attics, garage beams and furnace filters.
- Soil sampling should do the worst areas, not some sort of grid.
- Can EPA be effective? DEQ said they had a gun but it didn't have any bullets.
- Please get the sampling plan as quick as possible.
- How can homeowners help?
- My child/our children play in the dirt and may be exposed.
- Are there other locations where material is buried that we don't know about?
- Since we learned about the asbestos, first all the families met monthly. Now we are divided into 13 families who have filed a lawsuit, some who want to stay, and some who are just watching.
- An OIT student report from the historical society in 1989 may be a good place for background.

- How can you tell if you have been exposed to asbestos?
- Other issues include lead, and holes where pits are settling.
- Didn't know anything about former site problems until DEQ became involved in 2001.
- We do not want deed restrictions.
- We cannot get a bank loan to finish our house or a refinance.
- The buried pipe is a problem.
- We want surety. Not knowing is very difficult.
- Need to educate bankers and real estate people too.
- Prioritize the cleanup sites. How are priorities going to be established?
- Don't let high priced lawyers call the shots.
- Talk to us about the site, not the media.
- Please give us any results as they are available.
- Local weather may be a factor. Cleaned up yards may be recontaminated by property
- Residents are looking for tax relief – it is difficult to assess fair market value when nothing is selling.
- The county landfill is approved for asbestos disposal. Site can be expanded if needed.
- This is a small community and everyone is connected in multiple ways.
- MBK should be pay for the cleanup, but I don't want them doing the actual cleanup.

## **Site Description and Background**

North Ridge Estates is located about three miles north of Klamath Falls, Klamath County, Oregon, off of Old Fort Road. The North Ridge Estates subdivision is on the site of the former Marine Recuperation Barracks facility, built in 1944 by the United States Department of Defense.

EPA is doing a cleanup called an emergency removal at North Ridge Estates to control exposure to contamination and health risk from Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) left when the military barracks were torn down. Types of ACM found in the North Ridge Estates site includes Cement Asbestos Board (CAB), Vinyl Floor Tiles (VAT), roofing material containing asbestos, and asbestos-insulated steam pipe. In addition to asbestos, EPA is checking for the presence of petroleum hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, heavy metals and dry cleaning solvents.

Site timeline (still being refined):

- ❑ 1944 – Marine Recuperation Barracks built by the Department of Defense
- ❑ 1946 – the property is transferred to the State of Oregon for the Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT) Campus
- ❑ 1966 – OIT relocates to another site, the property is sold into private ownership
- ❑ 1966 to mid 1970's – vacant buildings stripped of salvageable materials such as copper, metals and wood, and some vacant buildings are demolished
- ❑ 1977 - MBK partnership purchases the site
- ❑ 1977-1990's – remaining buildings demolished, property subdivided into residential lots.
- ❑ 1979 – EPA issues order for cleanup and disposal of asbestos contamination
- ❑ 1993 – USACE visits the site and reports on burial sites for ACM
- ❑ 1990-2003 – 22 homes constructed at North Ridge Estates
- ❑ July 2001 – DEQ responds to complaint about contamination
- ❑ June – September 2002 - DEQ surveys and cleans up asbestos containing materials (ACM) on over 50 of the 81 acres surveyed. Fifty tons of ACM is collected and disposed of off site
- ❑ June 2002 – DEQ enters cleanup agreement with MBK. 50 tons of ACM is collected and disposed of off-site.
- ❑ April 2003 – DHS issues preliminary health consultation
- ❑ March 2003 – DHS/DEQ determines a significant public health hazard exists from asbestos exposure
- ❑ April 2003 – DEQ refers North Ridge Estates to the EPA emergency response program
- ❑ May 2003 – EPA signs an Administrative Order on Consent with MBK
- ❑ June – September 2003 – Surface cleanup begins
- ❑ August and September 2003 – Indoor, outdoor and ambient air sampling
- ❑ September 2003 – Soil sampling

## **APPENDIX A: Summary of Community Interview Process in May and June 2003**

Community interviews were held with individuals and small groups in May and June 2003. These open discussions were focused on understanding community concerns related to the cleanup and finding out how affected community members want to receive information about EPA activities and findings. The interviews aimed to find out how interested parties would like to be involved.

Judy Smith, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator and Dan Heister, On-Scene Coordinator conducted community interviews. Frank Messina and Cliff Walkey from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and Janice Panichello and Amanda Guay from the Oregon Department of Health Services participated in at least one of the meetings.

In general order of preference people like to get information in the following ways:

- E-Mail
- Fact sheets or flyers
- Information repository
- Radio, newspapers or other mass media for people who do not live in the neighborhood)
- Meetings
- Phone calls
- Bulletin board

Questions used to stimulate discussion (as needed):

- When did you first become aware of problems at North Ridge Estates?
- What is your understanding of the site history?
- Have you had any problems on your property?
- Do you know any of the parties who were involved in site operations?
- What are your current concerns about the site?
- Have you participated in activities concerning the site?
- How would you like to be involved in future activities?
- How can EPA best provide you with information concerning our response to the contamination?
- What kinds of information do you need?
- How do you want to receive information about the site and how frequently?
- How does the public perceive the presence of Federal or state officials in the area?
- Are there other environmental issues in the area that we should be aware of?
- Is there anything we haven't discussed that would be helpful to know about the site?
- Can you suggest other individuals or groups who we should contact for additional information?

Interviews and meetings held:

- May 8, 2003 Angie Mingus
- May 8, 2003 Tracie Graham
- May 9, 2003 Mike Roberts, Carl Gurskie, Joe Sarsenski, Margaret Wenneis, Lee Hopper, Archie and Linda Linman
- May 9, 2003 Karen Selim, Allen Burns, Jeff Devish, Angie and Kelly Mingus, Harriet and Mike Cornachione, Dan Stearns, Carolyn Winn, Andy and Beccy Peterson, Richard and Susan Gibson, Mike and Sophia Homfeldt
- June 3, 2003 Steve West, Klamath County Commissioner
- June 4, 2003 Jay Henry, Klamath County Director of Community Development, Tom Christ, Klamath County Solid Waste Director and Dave, Landfill foreman
- June 4, 2003 Reg LeQuieu, Klamath County Assessor and Don Ringgold, Lead Appraiser
- June 4, 2003 Staff, Klamath First Federal Bank

## APPENDIX B – Superfund Removal and Remedial Programs

EPA is responding to asbestos contamination at North Ridge Estates with a **removal action** authorized under the federal Superfund program. **Removal actions** are short-term cleanups to prevent, reduce or mitigate damage to the public or the environment. Removal actions take place at sites where hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants have been released, or where there is significant threat of a release. When EPA determines that a removal action was appropriate for North Ridge Estates, action began as soon as possible.

After the removal action is complete, one of two events can occur. (1) The site may be cleaned to the extent that no further federal response is needed. In this case, the decision would be documented. (2) If work remains EPA may extend the removal action or shift to a long-term remedial action. **Remedial actions** involve more detailed planning and decision-making processes than removal actions and may only be conducted at sites on or proposed for the National Priorities List.

**Remedial actions** differ from **removal actions** in several ways. To make a clear distinction between short-term removal actions and long-term remedial actions, Congress placed limits on the time and money available for a removal response. The limits for a removal action are two million dollars and six to twelve months. There are no set time or monetary limits placed on a remedial action as these activities are targeted for long-term, permanent response.

## APPENDIX C – Public Contacts Information

### News Media

KDKF TV Channel 31, PO Box 4220, Medford, OR 97501 (Elise Cartmill)

KOTI TV Channel 2, 125 S. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Medford, OR 97501 (Kelly Minty)

KFLS 1450 am, KKRB 96.5 fm, 1338 Oregon Avenue, Klamath Falls, OR 97601 (Lyle Ahrens)

KAGO 1150 am, 99.5 fm 4509 6<sup>th</sup> St. Suite 201, Klamath Falls, OR 97603 (Mike Garrard)

Klamath Falls Herald and News, PO Box 788, Klamath Falls, OR 97601 (Dylan Darling)

### Federal legislators

US Rep. Greg Walden 843 E. Main St Ste 400 Medford, OR 97504 (Midge Thierolf)

US Sen. Gordon Smith 1175 E. Main Ste 2D, Medford, OR 97504

### State Legislators

State Sen. Steve Harper 900 Court St. NE S-205, Salem, OR 97310

State Rep. Bill Garrard 900 State St. H-488, Salem, OR 97310

### County Commissioners

Steve West, Al Switzer, John Elliot 305 Main St Klamath Falls, OR 97601