

# NPL Site Narrative for Davenport and Flagstaff Smelters

## DAVENPORT AND FLAGSTAFF SMELTERS

### Sandy City, Utah

**Conditions at Proposal (December 1, 2000):** The Davenport and Flagstaff Smelter site is located east of the Town of Sandy City, Salt Lake County, Utah at the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon. A number of smelters operated in Little Cottonwood Canyon during the 1870s. Three of these smelters were located at the mouth of the canyon, the Davenport Smelter south of Little Cottonwood Creek, the Flagstaff Smelter on the north bank of Little Cottonwood Creek, and the McKay Smelter located immediately adjacent to the former Davenport Smelter site. The small town of Granite was built near the smelters and during its heyday (1872-1874) consisted of about 50 buildings serving the workmen at the smelters and the teamsters who hauled the ore from the mines. When the smelters closed, the town was abandoned.

The Davenport Smelter was a lead and silver smelter located on the south side of Little Cottonwood Creek just west of the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon. The smelter was located on the property purchased by the Davenport Mining Company from S. J. Despain on March 7, 1873. Ores smelted at the site were mined primarily from the Davenport and Matilda Mines located in Little Cottonwood Canyon and were hauled by wagon from the mines to the Davenport Smelter. The ores contained more than sixty to seventy ounces of silver per ton and were by volume between 12 and 18 percent lead. The smelter operated from 1872 until 1875. Early smelting activities in the Salt Lake Valley were reported to be conducted in a "...sadly careless and ignorant manner" and "...that in many cases half the lead is lost to the slag or up the chimney." L. E. Despain, the son of S. J. Despain, wrote in a letter dated January 12, 1948, that "...the smoke stacks were not built very high, and the flue dust fell on the vegetation (sic) poisoned (sic) all the horses, cattle, sheep and honey bees."

There are no records available that indicate that any material was removed from the Davenport Smelter site after 1875. It is reported that remains of the Davenport Smelter foundation have been identified at one of the residences included within the area of contamination. Large amounts of cobble-sized slag have been reported in the back yards of the residents. Current land use at the site includes a residential neighborhood and school.

The Davenport Smelter site was listed in the CERCLA Information System (CERCLIS) in April 1992 after site discovery during a study of historic smelters in the Salt Lake Valley conducted by the state of Utah. Soil samples were collected from the area of the Davenport and McKay smelters and analyzed for lead and arsenic in June of 1992 and a site assessment was conducted in July 1992. A Preliminary Assessment was conducted in August 1992. Sampling for a Site Inspection was conducted in June of 1994 and the Analytical Results Report was approved in April 1996. An Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) was conducted by the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (UDEQ), Division of Environmental Response and Remediation (DERR) for the Flagstaff and Davenport sites. Sampling for this EE/CA in part involved the collection of 946 soil samples from the area collected from October through December of 1998. Analytical data from samples collected for the EE/CA were used to prepare a map showing the area of contaminated soil.

The area of contaminated soils occurs in a residential area west of the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon, south of Little Cottonwood Creek and north of Little Cottonwood Road in an area that was known as the Beaver Pond Springs. The contaminated properties are located on Little Cottonwood Lane, Quail Ridge Road, Old Ranch Place, and Little Cottonwood Place. Soil samples from residential properties were collected by the UDEQ during October, November, and December of 1998 and reveal that 15 properties have documented levels of arsenic in the residential soil that are greater than three times the regional background. Twenty-two properties have documented levels of lead in the residential soil that are greater than three times the regional background.

**Status (April 2003):** EPA is considering various alternatives for this site.

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at [ATSDR - ToxFAQs](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.