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## Region 7

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## Fact Sheet

September 2016

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### Frequently Asked Questions Caney Residential Yards Superfund Site, Caney, Montgomery County, Kansas

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#### INTRODUCTION

The Caney Residential Yards Superfund Site is located in Caney, Kansas, and a surrounding part of southwestern Montgomery County, Kansas. Lead contamination of residential yards at the site is a result of local smelting operations that date back to about a century ago.

In the early 1900s, the discovery of natural gas in the area helped spur the development of zinc and lead smelting operations in Caney and elsewhere in southeast Kansas, as the gas was used to fuel smelter furnaces.

Over time, lead particles from those smelters and related operations became airborne and settled onto area properties. Also, it is likely that yards became contaminated as residents transported waste from the smelters, in the form of cinders and other material, to homes and other locations for use as driveway paving, construction backfill and landscaping material.

In recent years, sampling by EPA and Kansas Department of Health and Environment has identified a number of residential properties where soils contain more than 400 parts per million (ppm) of lead, which is considered EPA's action level for removal. Those previously sampled properties with greater than 400 ppm of lead, and other properties that may be identified through future sampling, will be included in EPA's removal action. EPA will continue its sampling efforts to ensure that all potentially impacted properties in the area will be assessed.

#### PUBLIC AVAILABILITY SESSION

EPA will hold a public availability session on Tuesday, Oct. 4, 2016, in Caney, to provide information and answer questions regarding the Superfund site. A brief presentation about EPA's planned activities will begin at 6 p.m., and an open question and answer forum will last until 8 p.m. The session will be held:

**Tuesday, October 4, 2016  
6 p.m. – 8 p.m.  
Caney City Hall  
100 W 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Caney, Kansas**

The Montgomery County Health Department will provide free blood lead screenings for children, if accompanied by parents at the Oct. 4 public availability session. Parents may also contact the health department at 620-251-4210 to arrange screening at another time, or contact their primary care physician.

#### WHY IS LEAD CONTAMINATION A CONCERN?

Lead is classified by the EPA as a probable human carcinogen and is a cumulative toxicant. Lead exposure can pose serious health risks, particularly for young children, pregnant women and nursing mothers. The early effects of lead poisoning are nonspecific and difficult to distinguish from the symptoms of minor seasonal illnesses.

EPA is committed to reducing human health impacts at this site by working toward a solution to clean up the lead contamination.

### **WHAT IS EPA DOING ABOUT LEAD EXPOSURE?**

The proposed action at this site involves excavation and removal of lead-contaminated soil, backfilling the excavated area to original grade with clean topsoil, and restoring a grass lawn at the properties. The removal action will consist of removal and proper disposal of soil and/or waste containing lead concentrations greater than 400 ppm from residential properties, and high child impact areas, such as schools and daycare facilities where a composite sample exceeds a concentration of 400 ppm.

### **WHO WILL PAY FOR THE CLEANUP?**

Because there is no viable potentially responsible party identified for the contamination, EPA will use resources from its Superfund program to address the cleanup. There is no cost to property owners.

### **HEALTH INFORMATION**

Lead is a toxic metal that is harmful if inhaled or swallowed. Children are more sensitive to lead than adults and can develop lifelong disabilities and problems from lead exposure. Children can get lead from soil into their bodies by putting their hands or toys in their mouths after touching the soil. Pregnant women and nursing mothers should also avoid exposure to lead to protect their children. Lead poisoning can cause negative health effects in infants and young children, including, but not limited to: slowed physical growth, hearing problems, nervous system damage, learning disabilities, hyperactivity and other behavioral problems, and decreased intelligence.

Lead exposure and its effects can be reduced by washing hands after playing outside and before meals, eating a diet high in calcium and iron, regularly cleaning floors, window sills, and other surfaces; regularly washing children's hands, bottles, pacifiers and toys; and removing shoes or wiping soil from shoes before entering your home. Children 7 years old and younger are

most at risk from lead. It is important that children in this age range be tested annually, because lead-poisoned children do not always look or act sick. Call your local health department or physician to get your child tested.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For information about the Caney Residential Yards Superfund Site:

<https://semspub.epa.gov/src/collection/07/AR64543>

For information about health effects from lead exposure: <http://www.epa.gov/lead> and <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/substances/toxsubstance.asp?toxid=22>

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact:

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