

NPL Site Narrative for Uravan Uranium Project (Union Carbide Corp.)

URAVAN URANIUM PROJECT (UNION CARBIDE CORP.) Uravan, Colorado

Conditions at proposal (October 15, 1984): Union Carbide Corp.'s Uravan Uranium Project includes the Town of Uravan in a remote, sparsely settled portion of Montrose County, Colorado. The site is on the San Miguel River 5 miles upstream of where it meets the Dolores River. The facility began as a radium-recovery operation in 1915 and was expanded to include vanadium recovery in 1935. Union Carbide established the Town of Uravan in 1935 to provide housing for the mine and mill workers. Except for the schools, the town is owned by Union Carbide.

As radium recovery became uneconomic, the mill began recovery of uranium in the 1940s, first for national defense and later for nuclear power applications. Past activities have been highly variable due to fluctuation in demand. There is little activity at the plant now due to the depressed uranium and vanadium markets.

Federal and State agencies have inspected this facility many times and have brought action against Union Carbide for numerous permit violations and hazardous material spills. These efforts have established that ground water and air at the site are contaminated with process wastes, including uranium, from the milling operations.

Status (January 1986): The Colorado State Health Department is currently reviewing the mill's application to renew its operating license. The State has filed a lawsuit against Union Carbide seeking recovery for damages to natural resources.

Status (June 10, 1986): This mining site is being placed on the NPL at this time because it is a noncoal site with mining operations that occurred after August 3, 1977, the enactment date of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA). Thus, it is neither regulated by SMCRA nor eligible for funds from the SMCRA Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Program.

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.