

F A C T S H E E T



United States
Department of Energy
Grand Junction Projects Office

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Monticello Vicinity Properties Project Site Boundary Program

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is undertaking the final steps of the Monticello Vicinity Properties Project to ensure that all contaminated materials generated as a result of activities at the Monticello millsite are identified and safely disposed. DOE is currently investigating whether some contaminated building equipment and materials may have left the site during the period of millsite operation. This fact sheet describes DOE's efforts to identify all properties containing contaminated Monticello millsite materials within an 8-mile radius of the millsite, and any other locations where contaminated materials may have been taken.

Background

The Monticello millsite was used for the milling of uranium and vanadium ore from 1940 until the closure of the mill in 1960. During that period, the site was managed by the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission and its contractors. Materials with low levels of radioactivity may have left the millsite and, subsequently, been transported to areas outside the current boundaries of the Monticello Vicinity Properties (MVP) Project. These materials include scrap metals, salvaged equipment, mill tailings, fencing, and other items. Mill tailings may have been used for foundations, masonry, sidewalks, patios, and fill material. Records do not indicate the final location or purchasers of those materials with the exception of the items sold to other government agencies (e.g., the city of Monticello, San Juan County, the Utah Department of Corrections, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs). Although those sales were conducted through the General Services Administration (GSA), GSA does not retain records for longer than 3 years after the date of sale.

What Is the Site Boundary Program?

Since 1983, DOE has been cleaning up more than 400 residential and business properties in Monticello under the Monticello Vicinity Properties Project. These cleanup actions have been limited to Monticello, the Monticello millsite, and areas adjacent to Montezuma Creek.

Investigation of millsite disposal practices indicates that millsite materials may have been transported beyond the area adjacent to the millsite. The exact

boundaries of the MVP Project have not been defined by DOE, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the State of Utah. Discussions among DOE, EPA, and the State of Utah in 1995 resulted in a strategy that will conclusively identify the properties to be included in the MVP cleanup program. This strategy is called the Site Boundary program. The strategy focuses on properties within an 8-mile radius of the Monticello millsite but may include properties beyond this, as described below.

How Will DOE Proceed?

DOE will use a three-step process to identify the location of possible Monticello millsite-related contamination on properties outside the current boundaries of the MVP Project. DOE will solicit information from the general public by using the following approach.

1. Letters and Public Notice

A letter will be sent via certified mail, return receipt requested, to property owners within an 8-mile radius of the millsite whose properties have not been previously surveyed. The letter will request property owners to notify DOE if they believe their properties contain millsite materials.

Public notices seeking information about millsite material that may have been used in construction on properties between 1940 and 1970 will be published in local newspapers. The notice will be similar to the letter in content and will solicit information and an opportunity to interview persons with information.

2. Interviews

Once property owners and others have provided DOE with information about possible contamination, interviews will be conducted to determine the likelihood that materials from the Monticello millsite are on

the properties. If additional information is necessary, interviews of other knowledgeable persons, such as former millsite employees, local contractors, former local elected officials, etc., will be conducted. DOE will make it clear in the interview process that no property owner will be held liable for the cost of remediating radiological contamination at a property that is included in the MVP Project.

3. Site Assessment and Cleanup

After information has been collected on properties, inclusion surveys will be conducted on properties if interviews or other sources of information indicate that materials from the Monticello millsite may be on the properties. Owners of property within the 8-mile radius who suspect, but are not certain, that their properties contain Monticello millsite materials will be able to request a survey. DOE will conduct the survey at no cost to property owners. DOE will not conduct a survey on property beyond an 8-mile radius of the millsite unless evidence exists that material from the Monticello millsite is present. Contractors (if they can be located) who performed the construction will be contacted to attempt to verify that the material originated at the Monticello millsite.

Once a property has been surveyed and found to contain radioactive contamination meeting the inclusion criteria, DOE will, in conformance with the terms of

the Federal Facility Agreement, recommend to the EPA and the State of Utah that the property be included and remediated under the ongoing program. The inclusion criteria used for the MVP Project will be used. (See Fact Sheet on the Monticello Vicinity Properties Project for more information).

What Is the Schedule?

DOE will issue the letter and the public notice in August 1995. DOE will then analyze the information received and determine whether additional properties should be surveyed for possible inclusion. DOE will begin inclusion surveys as quickly as possible after owner consent is obtained. DOE will then recommend to EPA and the State of Utah the properties to be included.

Following EPA and State concurrence, DOE will notify owners of additional included properties. DOE will work with property owners to schedule engineering assessments and any required cleanup. DOE will develop and submit schedules for design and construction to the EPA and the State of Utah.

The MVP Project is scheduled for completion in the fall of 1998.
