

# Lead and Arsenic Testing for Hayden and Winkelman Residents Spring 2015

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## Purpose

This fact sheet describes testing for lead and arsenic that will take place in Hayden and Winkelman, Arizona in spring 2015.

We recommend that everyone who lives in the community read this fact sheet, especially pregnant women and the parents of young children.

## Why the concern?

In Hayden and Winkelman there are high levels of arsenic and lead in the air, in waste piles from smelting processes, and in soil in some non-residential locations. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Asarco have cleaned up lead and arsenic in soil in residential and public areas in the towns.

- The air has lead and arsenic in it from smelting processes.
- Some non-residential soil has lead and arsenic that has settled out of the air onto the soil over time. Some lead and arsenic may have come from other sources as well.
- Tailings piles are located in and around the towns and are accessible to people in the area.

The Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR), the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), and EPA are conducting an exposure investigation. People in the community may have come into contact with lead and arsenic in the air and soil. In addition, people may come into contact with lead from old paint or other sources in their homes, and arsenic in their diets. EPA asked ATSDR to offer blood and urine testing for people in the community to measure lead and arsenic levels.

## What is an exposure investigation?

An exposure investigation is the collection and analysis of samples to determine whether people have been exposed to hazardous substances. In Hayden and Winkelman, ATSDR and ADHS plan to collect blood and



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urine to test for evidence of exposure to lead and arsenic. We will analyze the blood and urine samples to help us determine if people at higher risk for health effects (e.g., young children and pregnant women) are being exposed to high levels of lead and arsenic. Lead testing is done with a blood sample and arsenic testing is done with a urine sample

## What is the plan for lead and arsenic testing?

ATSDR will offer free, voluntary lead and arsenic testing for up to 200 people who live in Hayden and Winkelman:

- Children aged 9 months to 5 years for lead.
  - » We do not offer arsenic testing to this age group because it is difficult to collect urine samples from young children – especially those wearing diapers – and we cannot interpret the testing results because national comparison values do not exist.
- Children aged 6 years to 11 years for lead and arsenic.
- Pregnant women for lead and arsenic.
- Testing is voluntary and free of charge.
- Names, contact information, and test results will be kept confidential.
- Blood and urine samples will be sent to a laboratory at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for testing.



## What is the plan for follow-up after testing?

- Participants will receive a letter with their test results and, if necessary, recommendations for reducing exposures.
- ATSDR and ADHS representatives will be available to speak with participants about their results.
- ATSDR will contact all participants with a result that is above the investigation follow-up level for lead and/or arsenic to further discuss recommendations for reducing exposures and follow-up.
- ADHS will provide additional information to individuals who test above the follow-up level of 5 µg/dL for lead.
- ATSDR will summarize the results of the exposure investigation in a report.

## How can people be exposed to lead and arsenic in the area?

People may be exposed by breathing air that is contaminated with arsenic or lead.

People may also be exposed if they eat small amounts of contaminated soil, dust, or lead-based paint by accident. Young children are more at risk than adults because they play in areas where soil, dust, and paint may be found and then put toys and hands in their mouths.

## What are the possible health effects of exposure to lead and arsenic?

Lead exposure can cause learning and behavior problems in children and many other health effects. Some of the effects of exposure to lead may never go away.

Arsenic exposure can cause stomachache, nausea, and skin problems. Arsenic exposure over many years also raises the risk of cancer of the bladder, lung, liver, and skin.



## What are the benefits to me or my child of having the tests done?

### *Parents will:*

- Know the amount of lead in their child's blood and arsenic in their child's urine.
- Know if their child has more lead or arsenic in his or her body than most other children.
- Have information to share with their child's doctor for consultation and follow-up.
- Have information to help them identify and remove sources of lead or arsenic in their child's daily life.

### *Pregnant women will:*

- Know the amount of lead in their blood and arsenic in their urine.
- Know if they have lead or arsenic in their body at levels that could harm their developing baby.
- Have information to share with their doctor for consultation and follow-up.
- Have information to help them identify and remove sources of lead or arsenic in their lives.

## What are the risks to me or my child of having the tests done?

- Participants will feel a sting or pinch in their arm when the blood is drawn.
- Participants may feel frightened or emotional when the blood is drawn.
- After the blood draw, participants may feel throbbing at the place where the needle entered.
- Participants may have some bruising on their arm where the blood is drawn.
- Parent and participants may feel anxious or emotional when they receive the results of their test.

## How can eligible people sign up

### **If you want more information or to sign up for testing, please contact:**

Jamie Rayman, ATSDR (in California) at: (415) 947-4318 or [fpe7@cdc.gov](mailto:fpe7@cdc.gov)

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Dr. Bruce Tierney, ATSDR (in Georgia) at: (770) 488-0771 or [bgt2@cdc.gov](mailto:bgt2@cdc.gov)

Or call ATSDR toll free 1-888-320-5291

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