

Evaluation of Coldwater Creek Community Exposures

North St. Louis County, MO – Public Health Assessment for Public Comment

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) has released a draft report evaluating community exposure to radiological contaminants in sediment, water, or soil while playing or living near Coldwater Creek. The creek was contaminated by former radiological waste storage sites near the St. Louis Airport. Since 1998, the Army Corps of Engineers' Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) has been sampling and cleaning up areas related to the sites. Community members asked ATSDR, a non-regulatory federal public health agency, to do this evaluation. Objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Estimate potential exposures and resulting risk of harmful health effects
- Respond to community concerns
- Recommend actions to protect public health from harmful exposures

This fact sheet summarizes the findings of ATSDR's report and tells how to submit comments on the report.

You can find the report at: www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/coldwater_creek.

Key Findings and Recommendations

- **Radiological contamination in and around Coldwater Creek, prior to remediation activities, could have increased the risk of some types of cancer in people who played or lived there.** Children and adults who regularly played in or around the creek or lived in its floodplain for many years in the past (1960s to 1990s) may have been exposed to radiological contaminants. ATSDR estimated that this exposure could increase the risk of developing bone or lung cancer, leukemia, or (to a lesser extent) skin or breast cancer. More recent exposures (2000s and on) increased the risk of developing bone or lung cancer from daily residential exposure.
 - *ATSDR recommends that potentially exposed residents or former residents share their potential exposure related to Coldwater Creek with their physicians as part of their medical history and consult their physicians promptly if new or unusual symptoms develop.*
 - *Upon request, ATSDR can facilitate a consultation between residents' personal physicians and medical specialists in environmental health.*
 - *ATSDR recommends that the state consider periodically updating analyses on cancer incidence, cancer mortality, and birth defects, as feasible.*
- **ATSDR does not recommend additional general disease screening for past or present residents around Coldwater Creek.** The number of cases that might actually occur is small, and there is no way to tell if any particular cancer found was caused by this exposure or some other factor. Not everyone would have had exposures as high as assumed in our evaluation. Extra screening carries risk (such as false positive findings and extra radiation exposure from diagnostic imaging). A physician will use a patient's individual history, symptoms, age, and gender to determine appropriate screening or diagnostic testing.
 - *ATSDR recommends that potentially exposed residents or former residents share their potential exposure related to Coldwater Creek with their physicians as part of their medical history and consult their physicians promptly if new or unusual symptoms develop.*

- **ATSDR supports ongoing efforts to identify and properly remediate radiological waste around Coldwater Creek.**
 - *To increase knowledge about contaminant distribution and allay community concerns, ATSDR recommends future sampling include*
 - ✓ *areas reported to have received soil or sediment moved from the Coldwater Creek floodplain (such as fill used in construction)*
 - ✓ *areas with possible soil or sediment deposited by flooding of major residential tributaries to Coldwater Creek*
 - ✓ *indoor dust in homes where yards have been cleaned up or require cleanup*
 - ✓ *sediment or soil remaining in basements that were directly flooded by Coldwater Creek in the past*
 - *ATSDR recommends signs to inform residents and visitors of potential exposure risks in areas around Coldwater Creek not yet investigated or cleaned up.*

- **ATSDR is unable to evaluate other exposures of concern to the community.** No sampling data exist that would allow ATSDR to directly estimate exposures from other pathways, such as inhaling dust blown from historical radiological waste storage piles.
 - *ATSDR is evaluating the feasibility of conducting modeling to evaluate past air exposures.*
 - *ATSDR recommends public health agencies continue to evaluate community concerns about exposure to the extent possible and educate the community about radiological exposures and health.*

Next Steps

ATSDR's report is available for review at: www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/coldwater_creek and at the Florissant Valley Branch of the St. Louis County Library at 195 S. New Florissant Road in Florissant. Your comments will improve the quality of the report. Send comments by August 31, 2018 to ATSDRRecordsCenter@cdc.gov, or mail to:

ATSDR, ATTN: Records Center
 RE: Coldwater Creek, North St. Louis County, MO
 4770 Buford Highway, NE (MS F-09)
 Atlanta, Georgia 30341

Written comments received during the public comment period and ATSDR responses will appear in an appendix to the final report. The report will not include the names of people submitting comments. However, names may be releasable if ATSDR receives a U.S. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request.

Where to Learn More

ATSDR:	www.atsdr.cdc.gov
ATSDR Coldwater Creek Site:	www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/coldwater_creek
FUSRAP:	www.mvs.usace.army.mil/Missions/FUSRAP/SLAPS.aspx
Missouri Health:	health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/chronic/cancerinquiry

For questions about ATSDR activities at this site, contact the site team at ColdwaterCreek@cdc.gov.