Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

Roseville Residential Lead Sampling

Roseville's Rich Pottery History

The village of Roseville, located along the Muskingum-Perry County line in Southeastern Ohio, is famous for its long history of pottery production. From the late 1800s through the 1960s, potteries in this area were recognized nationwide as leaders in producing cookware and decorative pieces. Vast clay reserves suitable for ceramics could be found easily in the region. Many prominent potteries operated in the area, including Robinson Ransbottom, Nelson McCoy, Hoadley Pottery, Brush Pottery, C.V. Lowry Pottery, Roseville Stoneware, Roseville Ceramics Ungemach Pottery, Cookson Pottery, Friendship Pottery, and Alpine Pottery. Additionally, Roseville was home to many small facilities called "bluebird potteries," often with just one craftsman and one or two family members.

What is the source of lead contamination?

During the height of production, pottery was fired at very high temperatures (over 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit). Lead was used as a base material for the glaze because it can withstand a wide temperature range. Lead emissions in the earlier years of the pottery industry were high; at that time, no lead standards existed. As the pottery industry has grown and the dangers of lead have been further documented, the use of lead in the pottery-making process has been significantly reduced, replaced by no-lead and/or low-lead glazes.

Disposal practices historically were not monitored or documented. Disposal of waste glaze material that contained potentially high levels of lead commonly occurred with the disposal of "off-spec" pottery waste. The off-spec pottery waste, referred to locally as pottery-chuck, was abundantly available and widely utilized as fill material throughout the village. This historic and unregulated disposal method allowed for an undetermined amount of lead-based glaze material to be disposed of sporadically throughout the village.

What lead sampling and cleanup have already occurred?

Under a cooperative agreement with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) conducted a geographically focused lead investigation from 1996-1998. This investigation was called the Geographic Initiative of the Crooksville Roseville Pottery Area of Concern (CRPAC). The purpose was to determine if pottery operations in the CRPAC from the late 1800s through the 1960s had increased certain heavy metals in soil, ground water, surface water, and outdoor (ambient) air. During the investigation, residences were randomly selected for soil sampling in the Roseville/Crooksville area. The soil and ground water samples collected in 1997 indicated elevated lead levels in shallow soils and ground water throughout the CRPAC. The sampling detected lead concentrations above 10,000 parts per million (ppm) in soils at numerous locations.

As a result, the village and the U.S. EPA have cleaned up multiple properties throughout Roseville, including Brush Pottery, Ungemach Pottery, Hull Pottery, Friendship Pottery, the American Legion Trailer Park, and Roseville Primary School.

Why is more sampling necessary?

Historic clean-up efforts in the Roseville area have focused on the known former industrial pottery facilities and adjacent homes. Knowing that the off-spec pottery waste (pottery-chuck) was used as fill material throughout the village in the past, lead contamination is anticipated throughout residential areas.

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What should you expect during sampling?

Ohio EPA will collect soil samples at residential properties throughout Roseville to evaluate the presence of lead in the soil. To sample a property, Ohio EPA must obtain permission from the property owner or an individual authorized to give such consent. A property owner can grant consent by submitting a consent form that can be accessed and submitted at the Roseville Municipal Building located at 107 N. Main Street in Roseville, Ohio. Consent forms will also be mailed to residents and can be signed and mailed back to Ohio EPA at 2195 E. Front Street, Logan, Ohio 43138. Ohio EPA plans to conduct this sampling in 2024 and possibly into 2025.

A few days before the sampling, Ohio EPA will mark the proposed sampling locations with a white flag and the Ohio Utility Protection Service will ensure there are no underground utilities present at the proposed locations. If utilities are present, the proposed sampling locations will be adjusted.

On the day of the sampling, Ohio EPA will use hand tools to remove a small area of grass and dig no more than six inches for each sample. The number of samples collected on each property will depend primarily on the size of the property. Approximately eight ounces of soil will be collected into a glass jar for each sample. Once the soil samples are collected, the remaining soil will be put back into the holes, and the removed grass will be replanted. The soil samples will be sent to a laboratory for analysis. After Ohio EPA receives and reviews the laboratory data, a letter will be sent providing the laboratory results to the property owner (and tenant, if applicable).

Will your property need to be cleaned up?

If lab results show a property has lead levels in soil exceeding the newly updated residential lead standard (200 ppm), Ohio EPA will refer the property to U.S. EPA to conduct a cleanup of the property.

What can you expect during cleanup?

U.S. EPA will evaluate the referral package from Ohio EPA. If cleanup is needed, U.S. EPA will request access to the property and permission to clean the lead-contaminated soil. Soil cleanup for lead in residential areas includes removing the top layer of contaminated soil (typically a maximum of two feet deep) replacing it with clean topsoil, and replanting grass. U.S. EPA will establish the schedule for cleaning up individual properties.

Contact

For more information, contact Max Moore at ***max.moore@epa.ohio.gov*** or 614.644.2160.