



United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Environmental Justice
Region 8
ENF-EJ

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Community Environmental Awareness

Become the Eyes and Ears of Your Community



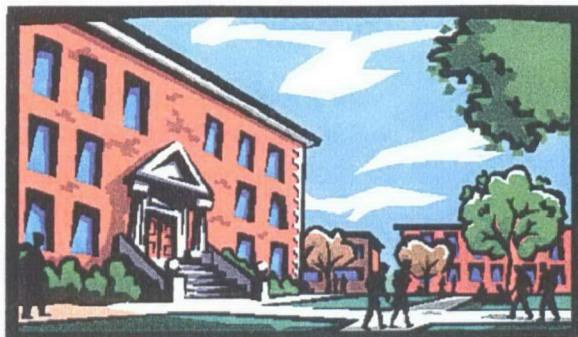
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Importance of Community Environmental Awareness

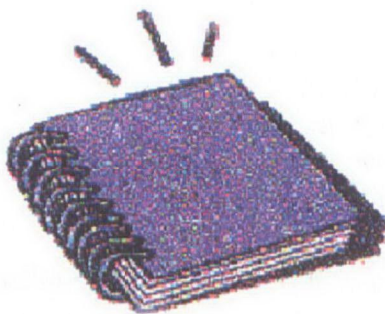
You make it work! Individual citizens are essential to the enforcement of our nation's environmental laws. Governments and environmental organizations do not have the resources to be in every community all the time. You are the eyes and ears of your community. Tips from the public help target scarce resources in areas where a potential problem may exist. You are an essential resource when it comes to solving environmental problems.



Acting as an environmental monitor in your community works best when you are informed about what constitutes an environmental concern, where to report a potential threat, and how to obtain more information.

1.2 Purpose of This Handbook

This handbook provides basic environmental information and a collection of resources useful to individual citizens. It gives you an idea of what to keep an eye out for in your community, and where to turn if you suspect a problem.



1.3 Community Awareness: A Success Story

What does it take to be the eyes and ears of a community? For inspiration, we can look to an example in Bon Carbo, Colorado, home to the Evergreen Operating Corporation, a coal bed methane drilling company.



In the spring of 1998, a community resident noticed that Evergreen Operating Corporation appeared to be discharging polluted water into local arroyos. He notified Southern Colorado Citizens United for Responsibility to the Environment (C.U.R.E.), a local citizens' group. After failed attempts to work with the Evergreen Corporation, C.U.R.E. filed a citizen's suit against Evergreen for violating the Clean Water Act. The charges prompted inspections by the Environmental Protection Agency, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission. These inspections confirmed the Bon Carbo man's suspicions.

After two years of opposition by Evergreen, C.U.R.E. won a consent decree against the company. To offset the penalty it faced, Evergreen agreed to treat the water in had been polluting. Water discharged from the facility is now tested for harmful pollutants under the company's new discharge permits.

This story demonstrates that citizens can and do make a difference. It shows that community members can effectively monitor their neighborhoods, helping government officials when budgets are stretched thin. Although one person may not have the time or resources to take on an entire industry, one person can start the ball rolling by alerting community organizations and government agencies to potential violations.



1.4 Helpful Environmental Awareness Tips



It is helpful to record:

- A detailed description of what you have observed
- Day and time of the observation
- How long the problem has been going on
- The source of the problem, or the direction that it appears to be coming from

Most importantly, report problems as soon as possible!

Chapter 2: **Eyes and Ears of the Community**

2.1 In Your Community: Air

Air pollution threatens all living things on our planet. Sources of air pollution include industrial smokestacks, chemical plants, dry-cleaners, gas stations, automobiles, trucks, buses, outboard motors, equipment engines, certain paints, and various household products. The goal of the Clean Air Act is to reduce the amount of pollution in our air. Being aware of the quality of the air in your community allows you to help keep the air clean and healthy, while you help enforce the Clean Air Act.



Warning Signs: Things to Look Out for in Your Air

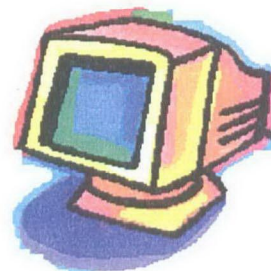
- **OPEN BURNING**
In most communities, it is not permissible for individuals, businesses, construction sites, etc., to burn trash within city limits.
- **UNUSUAL ODORS**
Strange smells may indicate the burning or release of hazardous or organic wastes.
- **UNUSUAL IRRITATION OR SENSITIVITY**
Symptoms such as stinging in the eyes or soreness of the nose or throat may also indicate the burning of wastes.
- **UNUSUAL BUSINESS ACTIVITY**
As a neighbor, you know the normal operating procedures of nearby businesses. Be on the look-out for unfamiliar behavior such as plants operating at night, excess burning, etc.
- **SMOKING VEHICLES**
Watch for vehicles that are visibly releasing pollutants. Remember that the colder the outdoor temperature, the more a car will appear to be polluting due to condensation of water.

State laws regulate the opacity, or thickness, of smoke emitted into the air. You can become certified to test the opacity of facilities in your neighborhood by attending a "Smoke School" training. Contact your state air quality division for more information.

2.2 Air Quality Resources

The Air Quality Index tells you how clean or polluted your air is and if you should be concerned about health problems. The Index is reported in local newspapers and on radio and television weather casts. You can also find it online at www.epa.gov/airnow.

State Air Permits can tell you exactly what your industrial and business neighbors are allowed to release into the air. You can obtain copies of state air permits by contacting your state air quality agency (listed below).



EPA's Energy Star Program promotes improved air quality through energy conservation at home and at work. Find out more about it by calling the Energy Star Hotline at 888-STAR-YES (888-782-7937) or by visiting www.energystar.gov.

2.3 State Air Quality Agencies

COLORADO

Department of Health and Environment,
Air Pollution Control Division

(303) 692-3100

MONTANA

Department of Environmental Quality,
Air Quality Bureau

(406) 444-4964

NORTH DAKOTA

State Department of Health,
Division of Air Quality

(701) 328-5188

SOUTH DAKOTA

Department of Environment and Natural Resources,
Air Quality Program

(800) 438-3367

UTAH

Department of Environmental Quality,
Division of Air Quality

(801) 975-4009

WYOMING

Wyoming Air Quality Division

(307) 777-7391

U.S. EPA

Region 8 Air Program Contact

(303) 312-6776

2.4 In Your Community: Drinking Water

The Safe Water Drinking Act (SWDA) protects human health by setting standards for the water that we drink. Many people get their drinking water from public water sources that are protected by SWDA. Others may get their drinking water from a private well. Wells may or may not be regulated, depending on the number of people using the well and the duration of use. It is important that you know the source of your drinking water.



Warning Signs: Things to Look Out for in Your Drinking Water

- Does the water look clear? Is it cloudy or colored?
- How does the water taste? Is it metallic or bitter?
- Is there an odor coming from the water in the tap or in the shower?
- Does the water feel thick or slippery?

Remember: Just because you answered "yes" to one or more of the questions above does not mean that your water is unsafe. Similarly, "no" answers to all of the above questions do not guarantee safe water. There may be contaminants in your water that cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted. It is also possible that there are chemicals in your water that are present in such small amounts that they do not pose a health risk.

As you can see, your water quality is determined by many factors. Testing is needed to confirm the quality of the water. If you would like to have your drinking water tested, the EPA recommends using a state-certified laboratory. To find an appropriate laboratory, look online at www.epa.gov/safewater/faq/sco.html. If you want to know what is in your drinking water, check your annual water quality report from your water supplier or call the water supplier directly.

2.5 Drinking Water Resources

Look on your water bill or in the "Government Pages" in your phone book under "City" to find information about your local water source and treatment plant.



EPA's publication "**Water on Tap: A Consumer's Guide to the Nation's Drinking Water**" clarifies how regulators and the water industry provide safe drinking water. It also explains how to get involved in the effort to protect our drinking water. To order a copy of this publication, call (800) 426-4791 or send your name, address, and a request for the Guide to: Water on Tap, Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, CO 81009. You can also access the Guide on the Internet at www.epa.gov/ogwdw/wot/ontap.html.

2.6 Drinking Water Agencies

COLORADO

Drinking Water Program

(303) 692-3500

MONTANA

Public Water Supply

(406) 444-5315

NORTH DAKOTA

Drinking Water Program

(701) 328-5210

SOUTH DAKOTA

Drinking Water Program

(605) 773-3754

UTAH

Division of Drinking Water

(801) 536-4188

WYOMING

Wyoming Drinking Water Program, U.S. EPA in Denver, CO

(303) 312-6312

EPA SAFE DRINKING WATER HOTLINE

(800) 426-4791

2.7 In Your Community: Surface Water

The Clean Water Act (CWA) protects much of our nation's surface water, including lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, and coastal waters. The CWA is also one of several laws that regulates the treatment of wastewater.

Policing surface water quality in your neighborhood can be difficult because many of the things that affect water quality (chemicals, nutrients, aquatic life) are not easily detected. However, community members should be aware of the condition of their local lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands. Citizens can also monitor the stormwater runoff in their area which, unless regulated, can flow untreated into bodies of water.



Warning Signs: Things to Look Out for in Your Surface Water

- **PET WASTE**

If pet waste travels into surface waterbodies that provide drinking water, it can be a direct source of bacteria in water systems. To avoid this, pick up after your pet and ask your neighbors to do the same.

- **DUMPING OF HOUSEHOLD CHEMICALS**

If chemicals such as motor oil, antifreeze, and paint are dumped on the ground or on parking lots, they can eventually make their way into nearby water systems. Many larger cities have recycling facilities that accept used motor oil and antifreeze.

- **DEAD FISH**

Large numbers of dead fish can be an indicator of unnatural pollutants in a lake or stream.



- **PIPES DRAINING DISCOLORED WATER**

Be on the lookout for discolored or odorous water entering your local lakes and rivers.

- **STAINS OF STRANGE COLORS**

Stains on river or lake shores (except black or green, which can be natural) may be an indication of unnatural pollutants.

- **ALGAL BLOOMS**

Some algal blooms (excess growth of algae) are natural, but they can also occur when too many nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorous, enter a water system. Be aware of any algal blooms occurring near drainage pipes, specifically pipes that drain from a sewage treatment plant.

- **FEEDLOT WASTEWATER / LIVESTOCK IN WATER**

If animal waste enters a water system through feedlot runoff or directly from livestock, it can be a direct source of bacterial contamination.

- **DUMPING OF PAINT OR CARPET CLEANER WASTE**

If you have painters or carpet cleaners at your home, watch how they dispose of their wastewater, since it is illegal for either of these operations to dump their wastewater into storm sewers.



- **MIDNIGHT DUMPERS**

Take note of trucks or other vehicles backed up to remote creeks and ditches late night.

2.8 Surface Water Quality Agencies

COLORADO

Water Quality Control Division

(303) 692-3500

MONTANA

Water Quality Division

(406) 444-4806

NORTH DAKOTA

Division of Water Quality

(701) 328-5612

SOUTH DAKOTA

Surface Water Quality Program

(605) 773-3351

UTAH

Division of Drinking Water

(801) 536-4200

WYOMING

Water Quality Surface Water Standards

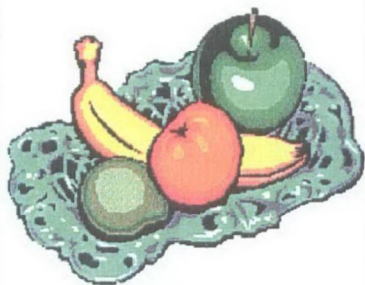
(307) 777-7081

U.S. EPA

Surface Water Quality Database

(800) 424-9067

2.9 In Your Community: Pesticides



Pesticides are products used to protect food and lawns from pests such as insects, rodents, weeds, molds, and bacteria. Some pesticides can cause health problems at elevated levels of exposure. Infants and children are especially vulnerable to pesticide exposure because their bodies are still developing. The most effective way for community members to monitor pesticides is through an awareness of how pesticides should be correctly applied.

The EPA regulates pesticides under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and assigns a registration number to each pesticide. If you know a product's registration number, you can obtain application and safety information online at the EPA Pesticides Program's Pesticide Product Label System at <http://oaspub.epa.gov/pestlabl/pppls.home>. If you only know the pesticide name, go to the EPA Pesticide Product Information Query Site at www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/epa/epamenu.htm.

Warning Signs: Things to Look Out for in Pesticide Use

If you see someone spraying a lawn or crops, it is not necessarily a cause for alarm. You should be alarmed by:

- **OVER SPRAYING**
Applying too much of a pesticide can cause it to travel onto other properties.
- **WINDY DAYS / DRIFTING**
Wind and storms can blow pesticides into undesignated areas.
- **PROXIMITY TO PEOPLE OR ANIMALS**
Pesticides should not be used near people or animals.
- **PROXIMITY TO A WATER SYSTEM**
Pesticides should not drain into or otherwise enter storm drains, ditches, reservoirs, or other water sources.
- **DUMPING**
Pesticides should not be poured onto the ground or into lakes, streams or wetlands. Empty or half-empty bottles of pesticides should not be left lying around where they are susceptible to accidental spills or where they can be reached by children or animals.

Keep in mind that discussing your concerns about pesticide use with the responsible party (individual, company, park service, etc.) may result in a quick and efficient resolution of the problem by bringing the potential threat of misused pesticides to their attention.



2.10 Pesticide Authorities



COLORADO

Department of Agriculture, Pesticide Application Program

(800) 239-4141

MONTANA

Department of Agriculture

(406) 444-3144

NORTH DAKOTA

Department of Agriculture, Pesticide Enforcement

(701) 328-4756

SOUTH DAKOTA

Department of Agriculture, Division of Agricultural Services,
Office of Agronomy Services

(605) 773-4432

UTAH

Department of Agriculture, Division of Plant Industry

(801) 538-7188

WYOMING

Department of Agriculture, Technical Services

(307) 777-7324

NATIONAL PESTICIDES TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

(800) 858-7378

U.S. EPA OFFICE OF PESTICIDE PROGRAMS

www.epa.gov/pesticides/food

(800) 490-9198

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Meat and Poultry Hotline

USDA National Organic Program

www.usda.gov

(800) 535-4555

(202) 720-3252

U.S. FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

Food Safety and Applied Nutrition

Outreach and Information Center

www.cfsan.fda.gov

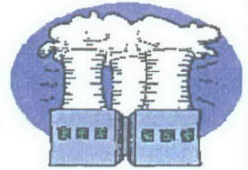
(888) 723-3663



For additional information on pesticides, search the
ExToxNet Extension Service at <http://ace.orst.edu/info/extoxnet>

2.11 In Your Community: Solid and Hazardous Waste

Solid and hazardous waste exists as part of a community's commerce and industry. This waste poses a potential health threat if not properly handled. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) governs the management of solid and hazardous waste.



Warning Signs: Things to Look Out for in Your Community

- **VACANT LOTS**

Illegal dumping tends to happen where there are no buildings or people. Be on the look-out for accumulation of wastes, especially pesticide containers, paint cans, used oil, unmarked drums, and stacks of tires or batteries.

- **UNUSUAL BUSINESS ACTIVITY**

Late-night activity or an accumulation of drums on a property may be cause for concern.

- **TANKER TRUCKS**

Trucks parked in areas away from commercial or industrial activity may be dumping hazardous wastes into fields or other open areas.

2.12 Solid and Hazardous Waste Agencies

Your first point of contact should be your local public works department. Look in the "Government Pages" of your phone book under "City" or "County" for a number to report illegal dumping.

COLORADO

Solid Waste and Incident Management Section

(303) 692-3300

MONTANA

Air and Waste Management

Hazardous Waste Site Cleanup Bureau

(406) 444-3490

(406) 444-1420

NORTH DAKOTA

Division of Waste Management

(701) 328-5166

SOUTH DAKOTA

Waste Management Program

(605) 773-3153

UTAH

Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste

(801) 538-6170

WYOMING

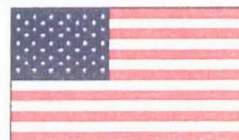
Solid Waste Program

Hazardous Waste (U.S. EPA, Region 8)

(307) 777-7752

(303) 312-6352

2.13 In Your Community: Homeland Security



Because of recent tragic events, homeland security is one of the nation's highest priorities. Each of us can play a role in safeguarding our country from terrorism. The need for strengthening and securing our communities and protecting human health and the environment is now more critical.

EPA Emergency Preparedness



Environmental emergencies involving the release, or threat of release, of oil, radioactive materials, or hazardous chemicals may potentially affect communities and the surrounding environment. Releases may be accidental, as in the case of a spill at a chemical plant, or they may be deliberate. Releases may also be caused by natural disasters. EPA works with a variety of private and public entities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to spills and other environmental emergencies. EPA's Environmental Emergencies web site (www.epa.gov/epahome/emergenc.htm) provides information about these activities, links to key groups involved in contingency planning and response, and provides information on how to report hazardous substance and oil spills.

Environmental Emergencies

An environmental emergency is a sudden threat to public health arising from the release or potential release of oil, radioactive materials, or hazardous chemicals into the air, land, or water. These emergencies may occur from transportation accidents, events at chemical or other facilities using or manufacturing chemicals, or as a result of natural or man-made disasters.

Chemical Spills / Accidents

In response to public concern about chemical spills and accidents, EPA created its Chemical Emergency Preparedness Plan (CEPP) as a voluntary program to encourage state and local authorities to identify hazards in their area and to plan for potential chemical emergencies. This local planning complements emergency response planning being carried out at the national and regional levels by National Response Teams (NRTs). For more information about CEPP, go to www.epa.gov/ceppo. To learn more about National Response Teams, go to www.nrt.org, or go to www.nrt.org/epa/nrt/home.nsf to learn about EPA's role in NRTs.

Oil Spills

EPA's Oil Spill web site provides information about its program for preventing, preparing for, and responding to oil spills that occur in and around inland waters of the U.S. To learn more about this program, go to www.epa.gov/oilspill/index.htm.



To report oil and chemical spills,
call the **National Response Center** at **1-800-424-8802**.

2.14 Homeland Security Offices

COLORADO

(303) 273-1680

Colorado Department of Public Safety

MONTANA

(406) 841-3911

Disaster and Emergency Services

www.discoveringmontana.com/homelandsecurity/css/default.asp

NORTH DAKOTA

(701) 328-8100

Homeland Security / Emergency Management

www.state.nd.us/dem/HomeSec.html

SOUTH DAKOTA

(866) 466-5263

Homeland Security

www.state.sd.us/homeland

UTAH

(800) 753-2852

Comprehensive Emergency Management

www.cem.utah.gov

WYOMING

(307) 772-5234

NATIONAL CONTACTS

Homeland Security

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/homeland>



2.15 Environmental Emergency Resources



In general, responsibilities for responding to environmental emergencies are spread across the federal, state, and local sectors, depending on the size and type of emergency. Those involved include the environmental, emergency management, public safety, and public health agencies of all three levels of government.

The Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office (CEPPO) was created by EPA in 1985 to help build programs to respond to and prevent chemical accidents. For more information, go to www.epa.gov/ceppo.

The National Response Team (NRT) includes fifteen federal agencies responsible for preparing for, or responding to, major oil or hazardous chemical emergencies. EPA is the chair of the National Response Team. Corresponding regional teams are in each of the ten EPA regions. For more information, go to www.nrt.org.



Area Contingency Committees consist of regional EPA representatives who specifically plan for oil spills. To learn more, go to www.epa.gov/oilspill/conting.htm.

The Federal Radiological Preparedness Group consists of 17 federal departments and agencies who respond to radiological emergencies under the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan (FRERP). For details, go to www.epa.gov/radiation/rert.



**American
Red Cross**

Together, we can save a life

The American Red Cross is American's largest nonprofit humanitarian organization. Each year it helps people prevent, prepare for, and cope with emergencies. For more information on the American Red Cross, go to www.redcross.org.

2.16 Community Safety Programs



Neighborhood Watch Program

For three decades, in cities around the country, neighbors have banded together to create Neighborhood Watch Programs. They understand that the active participation of neighborhood residents is a critical element in community safety. Through a simple willingness to be on the look-out for suspicious activity in their community and to report that activity to authorities, residents take a major step toward reclaiming high-crime neighborhoods, as well as making people in all areas of a city or town feel more secure and less fearful.

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the need for strengthening and securing our communities has become even more critical. President Bush has announced that, with the help of the National Sheriffs' Association, the Neighborhood Watch Program will be taking on a new significance. Under this new program, community residents are provided with information on how to recognize signs of potential terrorist activity and how to report that activity. By participating in this program, citizens become a critical element in the detection, prevention, and disruption of terrorism.

Many neighborhoods already have Neighborhood Watch programs that are vibrant and effective. For those that do not, you can learn more by visiting the Neighborhood Watch Program web site at www.nnwi.org. For additional information on the role of Neighborhood Watch Groups in Homeland Security, go to www.usaonwatch.org.

Citizens Corps

On April 8, 2002, President Bush released "Citizen Corps: A Guide for Local Officials" and asked local communities across the country to start Citizen Corps Councils. These programs initiate local citizen participation by developing community action plans, assessing possible threats, and identifying local resources. These Councils consist of various leaders from local government, including those from emergency management and first responder agencies, community volunteer and faith-based organizations, and other relevant sectors.

You can learn about these Councils by going to www.citizencorps.gov. Even if your community has not yet formed a Council, there may be other appropriate ongoing programs in your area. We suggest you contact your mayor's office, or another local official, to express your interest in having a Citizen Corps in your community and to find out what activities may already be underway.



2.17 Suspicious Activity

What Is Suspicious Activity?

Be alert if you observe someone engaging in any of the following activities, especially if the individual is a stranger to the area:

- The individual is loitering on premises that may have toxic materials present when the facility is closed for business.
- The individual is loitering on or near a facility that may have a chemical storage area.
- The individual acts nervous, avoids eye contact, and / or appears uneasy.
- The individual is in a place that appears to be closed to the public, and the individual appears not to be someone who works for the entity.



Reporting Suspicious Activity to Law Enforcement Authorities

If you see or witness suspicious activity near a facility that may have toxic chemicals present, timely cooperation with authorities is crucial. If you have noticed either of the following things, you should report it to local authorities:

- Any home or business break-ins.
- Any dumping taking place when a facility is closed or in a place not designated for dumping.

If you can safely get a description of suspicious individuals and / or vehicles, including license plate number, provide this to the police as well. The more information they have, the better they can respond to your concern.

Chapter 3: In Your Home

3.1 Radon

Radon is a radioactive gas produced from the natural decay of uranium, which is found in nearly all soils. Radon enters homes through cracks and other holes in the foundation and becomes a problem when it gets trapped inside. Any home, whether new or old, drafty or tightly sealed, may have a radon problem. The measurement standard for radon is picocuries per liter (pCi/L). Average radon levels are approximately 0.4 pCi/L outdoors and 1.3 pCi/L indoors. The maximum standard set by the EPA is 4.0 pCi/L. Most homes can be reduced to 2.0 pCi/L by sealing cracks in floors or walls, or by using pipes and fans to redirect radon gas. However, no level of radon is completely safe. The Surgeon General has warned that radon is a leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, second only to smoking. For general information about radon, go to www.epa.gov/iaq/radon.



Testing for Radon

The only way to find out if your home has elevated levels of radon is to perform a test. Any test should meet EPA's testing program requirements or be state-certified.

• SHORT-TERM TEST

- Takes between 2 and 90 days (depending on the test) to get results
- Costs \$15-\$60
- Available at some large hardware stores, by mail through your state radon office, and for rent by some radon contractors

• LONG-TERM TEST

- Takes more than 90 days to get results
- Costs approximately \$35
- More accurate than the short-term test

Once the test is performed, the results must be read by a laboratory or contractor. The cost for this service may be included in the cost of the test; otherwise, it is usually between \$15 and \$55. An acceptable laboratory should be listed on the test package.



3.2 State Radon Authorities

COLORADO

Department of Public Health and Environment
Radon Management Program

(303) 692-3090

MONTANA

Planning, Prevention, and Assistance Division

(406) 444-6697

NORTH DAKOTA

Department of Health,
Division of Environmental Engineering

(701) 328-5188

SOUTH DAKOTA

Division of Air Quality

(605) 773-3151

UTAH

Division of Radiation Control

(801) 536-4250

WYOMING

Wyoming Radon Program

(800) 458-5847

3.3 Other Radon Resources

Local Certified Radon Inspectors

Call your state radon office for a contact list, or go online at www.radongas.org for a detailed list of certified inspectors in your area.

U.S. EPA

EPA's Indoor Air Quality Information Clearinghouse can provide you with information and brochures on radon gas, health risks, and reduction of radon in homes. You can call the Indoor Air Quality Information Clearinghouse at 1-800-438-4318 or write to them at P.O. Box 37133; Washington D.C. 20013-7133 for information or to order brochures. Listed below are several of the EPA Radon publications accessible online at www.epa.gov/iaq/radon/pubs/index.html. Many of these publications are available in Spanish as well.

A Citizen's Guide to Radon
Home Buyer's and Seller's Guide to Radon
Consumer's Guide to Radon Reduction
Radon—A Physician's Guide
Radon in Schools



3.4 Lead

Lead can be found in dust, paint, soil, drinking water, or food. Exposure to lead poses a health risk, especially to certain vulnerable populations.

Who Should Be Concerned about Lead?

- **THOSE WHO LIVE IN OLDER HOMES**

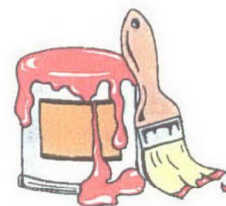
Homes built prior to 1978 may contain leaded paint, even if they have been repainted.

- **FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN OR PREGNANT WOMEN**

The long-term effects of lead exposure in a child include learning disabilities, decreased growth, hyperactivity, impaired hearing, brain damage, and even death. Lead can pass through pregnant women to their fetus.

- **THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY BEEN EXPOSED TO LEAD**

Lead can be stored in the body for many years. The greater the exposure, the greater the change of lead-related illness, including reproductive problems, high blood pressure, digestive problems, nerve disorders, memory and concentration problems, and muscle and joint pain.



Know Your Rights!

LANDLORDS have to disclose if they know, do not know that lead hazards exist in rental space before a lease takes effect. They must also disclose if it is unknown whether or not lead hazards exist.

SELLERS have to disclose known or unknown information on lead-based paint and other lead hazards before selling a house. Sales contracts must include a disclosure form about lead-based paint. Buyers have up to 10 days to check for lead hazards.

RENOVATORS have to distribute an informational pamphlet before starting work.

Learn More about Lead

A simple blood test can detect high levels of lead in the body. Call your doctor or local health clinic to find out whether a test is recommended for you or your children. Be sure to ask if the cost of the test is covered by a health screening plan.

For information about lead in your plumbing, call the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791. If you are interested in having your plumbing tested, call your local health department or water supplier to find out how to get this done.

3.5 Lead Agencies

NATIONAL LEAD INFORMATION CENTER

Information on temporarily reducing lead hazards, contacts for professional home testers, and abatement contractors in your area.

(800) 424-LEAD

(800) 424-5323

COLORADO

Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

(800) 886-7689

MONTANA

Division of Planning, Prevention, and Assistance

(406) 444-6697

NORTH DAKOTA

Department of Health, Division of Air Quality

(701) 328-5188

SOUTH DAKOTA

Department of Health and Environmental Control

(605) 773-3368

UTAH

Lead-Based Paint Program

(801) 536-4451

WYOMING

Preventative Medicine Division

(307) 777-6015

U.S. EPA

www.epa.gov/lead

(800) 227-8917

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

www.hud.gov/lead

(202) 755-1785

LEAD HOTLINE

(888) 532-3547

Lead Testing

Professionals are recommended for home testing and abatement. Home test kits are not always accurate, and removal can generate large amounts of lead dust. Call your state lead agency or your local health department to find out if testing can be done for free. Otherwise, look in your local phone book under "Lead Detection and Removal" or contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Lead Hotline (listed above). Testing and abatement costs vary, so you may want to call several places for estimates.



3.6 Asbestos

Asbestos can be found in many parts of the home, including interior and exterior surfaces and insulation. Asbestos that is properly sealed or that is non-friable (meaning that it cannot be crushed by hand pressure) does not pose a health hazard. However, exposure to friable asbestos (asbestos that can be reduced to dust with hand pressure), which releases tiny fibers into the air, can cause health problems. Among the health threats posed by friable asbestos are lung cancer, asbestosis (a chronic, progressive lung disease), and mesothelioma (cancer of the lung and chest cavity or of the abdominal wall). Symptoms from asbestos exposure generally do not appear for 10 to 30 years after exposure, and no safe level of exposure is known.

The only way to tell for sure if a material is safe is to have it analyzed in a laboratory. Certified laboratories are listed in the yellow pages under "Laboratories Analytical." Removal of asbestos should not be attempted by anyone but a professional. To find a qualified professional, look under "Asbestos Abatement" in your yellow pages. Be aware that you may be required to notify authorities in your area before you remodel, dismantle, or demolish your home, in order to minimize potential asbestos exposure.

3.7 Asbestos Agencies

COLORADO

(303) 692-3179

Asbestos Program,
Department of Public Health and the Environment

MONTANA

(406) 444-2690

Asbestos Control Program, Air and Waste Management Division,
Department of Environmental Quality

NORTH DAKOTA

(701) 328-5188

Asbestos Control Program, Division of Air Quality
Department of Health

SOUTH DAKOTA

(605) 773-3153

Asbestos Program, Department of Waste Management,
Department of Environment and Natural Resources

UTAH

(801) 536-4000

Hazardous Air Pollutants Section, Division of Air Quality
Department of Environmental Quality

WYOMING

(800) 458-5847

Lead Project, Department of Health

U.S. EPA

(800) 438-4318

Indoor Air Quality Hotline
www.epa.gov/asbestos

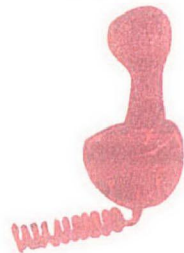
Chapter 4: **General Contacts and Resources**

4.1 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The EPA web site contains large amounts of information on environmental issues and laws in the U.S. For introductory information, go to www.epa.gov. For information specific to Region 8, visit www.epa.gov/region8. To learn more about the major environmental laws now in effect, visit www.epa.gov/epahome/laws.htm. For general information about environmental violations and emergencies, go to www.epa.gov/epahome/violations.htm. You can also contact the Region 8 EPA office by telephone at 1-800-227-8917, or by mail at 999 18th Street, Suite 300; Denver, Colorado; 80202.

4.2 State and Local Health and Environmental Departments

Many environmental concerns, such as strange odors, household chemical disposal, and smoking vehicles are handled by county or state departments of health and / or environment. These departments can direct you to the appropriate division for your particular concern. To find the number of your local health department, look in the "Government Pages" of your phone book under "County" or contact your public library.



State Departments of Health and / or Environment

<u>COLORADO</u> Department of Public Health and Environment	(303) 692-2000
<u>MONTANA</u> Department of Environmental Quality	(406) 444-2544
<u>NORTH DAKOTA</u> Department of Health Environmental Health Section	(701) 328-2372 (701) 328-5150
<u>SOUTH DAKOTA</u> Department of Health Department of Environment and Natural Resources	(605) 773-3361 (605) 773-3151
<u>UTAH</u> Department of Environmental Quality	(801) 536-4400
<u>WYOMING</u> Department of Environmental Quality	(307) 777-7937

4.3 Community Resources

There are many private organizations that can provide resources, information, advice, training, and assistance to community members and groups interested in their local environment. Since each community's concerns are unique and each organization's focus is slightly different, it may require a little research to find an organization that fits your needs. The groups listed below are large organizations with the knowledge and expertise to help you or connect you with others who can.

EARTH FORCE

www.earthforce.org

The focus of Earth Force is to empower young people to discover and implement solutions to environmental issues in their communities. This organization has several environmental education kits available on its web site, and it also provides training to teachers.

Regional Office
2120 West 33rd Avenue
Denver, CO 80211
(303) 433-0016

Headquarters
1908 Mount Vernon, 2nd Floor
Alexandria, VA 22301
(703) 299-9400

LOKA INSTITUTE

www.loka.org

The Loka Institute provides training on how to be a successful community organizer. It can also link you and your community to other training and resources. The Loka Institute is located in Washington, D.C., and has no local contact. However, they can be contacted by phone, mail, and email.

The Loka Institute, c/o ICTA
660 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., Suite 302
Washington, D.C. 20003
(301) 585-9398
Loka@Loka.org



SCORECARD

www.scorecard.org

This web site, which is maintained by the nonprofit group Environmental Defense (ED), allows you to gather environmental data about your community. You can learn about air and water quality, hazardous waste, lead, and other environmental hazards. You can also visit Environmental Defense's main web site at www.environmentaldefense.org.

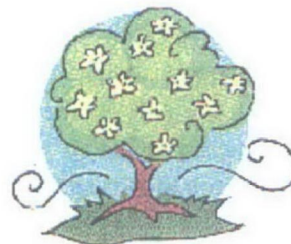
ED Regional Office
2334 North Broadway
Boulder, CO 80304
(303) 440-4901

ED Headquarters
257 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10010
(212) 505-2100

SIERRA CLUB**www.sierraclub.org**

The Sierra Club is a national environmental organization with an office in almost every state. Local Chapter contact information can be found on the national web site or by calling the national office.

National Office
85 Second Street, 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105-3441
(415) 977-5500

**WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE****www.keeper.org**

A "Keeper" is an active eye-witness who ensures environmental laws are enforced, responds to citizen concerns, educates the community, and pursues ways to improve water quality. The Waterkeeper Alliance is located in New York. Its local offices are organized not by state or region, but by the waterbodies they protect. To find an office near you, contact the national office or visit the main Waterkeeper Alliance web site.

Waterkeeper Alliance
828 South Broadway, Suite 100
Tarrytown, NY 10591
(914) 674-0622
Info@waterkeeper.org

The above organizations represent only a fraction of the environmental and citizens groups in the U.S. To learn about other organizations, visit www.webdirectory.com or www.ceds.org.



4.4 Notes