

# Residential Seeps and Springs Fact Sheet

A Fact Sheet for the 700 South 1600 East PCE Plume Site in Salt Lake City

## Why are the springs contaminated?

In 1990, a groundwater plume of tetrachloroethylene (PCE) was discovered in Salt Lake City near 700 South and 1600 East. Seeps and springs fed by groundwater in the area also contained PCE. A former dry-cleaning facility at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center was named as the likely source of the PCE plume. The 700 South 1600 East PCE Plume Site was added to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) National Priorities List of Superfund Sites in May 2013. Additional information about the site is available at [www.pceplume.org](http://www.pceplume.org).

A **plume** is a body of polluted groundwater within an aquifer system.

## What is PCE & what are the health concerns related to PCE exposure?

PCE is a colorless liquid used for dry cleaning fabrics and degreasing metals. Common consumer products, such as adhesives, spot removers, brake or parts degreasers/cleaners, shoe polish, printing inks, paints, and household cleaners may also contain PCE. Long-term exposure (longer than one year) to low levels of PCE may cause changes in mood, memory, attention, reaction time, and vision. Animal studies have shown PCE exposure can cause cancers of the liver, kidney, and blood system. EPA considers PCE likely to cause cancer in humans.

## Can my kids play in the springs?

Since 2016, water from seeps, springs, and Red Butte Creek have been sampled for PCE. A map showing the sample locations is provided on the next page. Data from the water samples were used to conduct human health risk evaluations. The risk evaluations considered the potential for exposure to PCE on skin from wading and playing in the water or contacting wet soils, as well as incidental ingestion from splashes. The risk evaluations determined the PCE concentrations found in the seeps and springs were much lower than estimated values that could potentially result in a health risk.

A health risk evaluation is the process of assessing the potential impact of chemicals in the environment on the health of a person.

## Can pets drink from the springs?

Risk to pets, including dogs of all sizes, was also evaluated. PCE in the water evaporates into the air so pets will not be exposed to significant amounts of PCE by drinking from the springs. The risk evaluation was very conservative and assumed dogs would get all their drinking water from the springs, even though this is very unlikely.

## What has been done to address the contamination?

Monitoring of seeps and springs will continue as part of the comprehensive response to the groundwater contamination at the Superfund Site. An evaluation of cleanup options to treat the contaminated groundwater and the seeps and springs is the next phase. The public will have the opportunity to take part in the remedy selection process by attending public meetings and providing feedback on the proposed plan for the site.

# For more information about the 700 South 1600 East PCE Plume Superfund Site contact:



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