

RESIDENTIAL SEEPS AND SPRINGS FACT SHEET

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A FACT SHEET FOR THE 700 SOUTH 1600 EAST PCE PLUME SITE IN SALT LAKE CITY

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Overview

Why are the Springs Contaminated?

A groundwater plume of tetrachloroethylene (PCE) was discovered in Salt Lake City near 700 South and 1600 East. Sampling in the area found PCE in local groundwater-fed seeps and springs. A former dry-cleaning facility operated in the 1970s and 1980s by the Veterans Affairs Medical Center was named as the likely source of the PCE contamination. 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.

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

What is PCE and 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 dry-cleaned fabrics, adhesives, fragrances, spot removers, water repellants, brake or parts degreasers/cleaners, 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. EPA has classified PCE as a likely carcinogen to people.

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Additional information about the site is available at www.PCEplume.org

Can my kids play in the springs?

Since 2016, water from seeps, springs, and Red Butte Creek have been sampled for PCE. 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 that PCE concentrations found in the seeps and springs were much lower than calculated values that could potentially result in a health risk.

Can pets drink from the springs?

Risk to pets, including dogs of all sizes, was also evaluated. PCE in the water readily evaporates into the air so pets would 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.

I water my garden with spring water. Are my vegetables safe to eat?

PCE evaporates very easily and much of the chemical present in the water or soil would disperse into the air before it has a chance to be absorbed by plant tissue. Also, studies have shown that plant uptake of PCE and similar chemicals is negligible and would not pose a serious risk to human health.

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 commenting on the proposed remediation plan for the site.

**For more information about the
700 South 1600 East PCE Plume Superfund Site
visit www.PCEplume.org
or contact us directly.**