



# Colorado Smelter

## fact sheet



Colorado Department  
of Public Health  
and Environment



## Health Information

### ***Contamination and Historic Smelting Operations in Pueblo***

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has tested some of the neighborhood yards possibly harmed by historic smelting operations near the Colorado Smelter in the Eilers neighborhood of Pueblo. Some samples exceeded federal health levels for arsenic and lead. More investigation needs to occur to better understand the extent of contamination. Historic smelting operations and emissions often leave remains of heavy metals, including arsenic and lead, in soils. Also left behind is a “slag pile” the area of dark grey to black rocky material located between I-25 and Santa Fe.



### ***Soil and the Health of You and Your Family***

Soil and dust that contains arsenic and lead can enter the body by breathing in, eating, drinking or swallowing. For example, when children play, they sometimes touch things that have contaminated dirt or dust on them and then put their hands or other items into their mouths.

### ***Possible Health Effects from Arsenic and Lead***

Health effects linked with being around arsenic for a long time are an increased risk for some types of cancer such as skin, lung, bladder, kidney, and liver cancers.

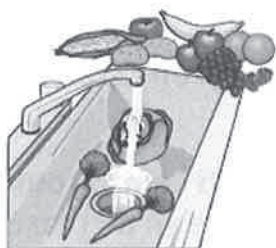
The possible effects of higher levels of lead in children are hearing problems, lower IQ scores and delays in development. Lead can come from many sources; household paint made before 1978, the glaze on some pottery or dishes, soil, and sometimes drinking water. Adults can also be harmed by high levels of lead in their bodies (e.g., hypertension, anemia, kidney disease).

### ***Tips to Protect Your Family***

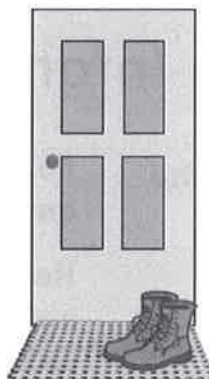
- Children and adults should avoid contact with the “**slag pile**”.
- Watch preschool children when they are playing outside. Keep them from eating dirt or mud and from putting dirty toys in their mouths.
- Encourage preschool children to play in grass-covered areas of the yard.
- Talk to children about not eating soil or mud from their yards.

# Ways to protect your health

By keeping dirt from getting into your house and into your body



Wash and peel all fruits, vegetables, and root crops



Wipe shoes on doormat or remove shoes



Don't eat food, chew gum, or smoke when working in the yard



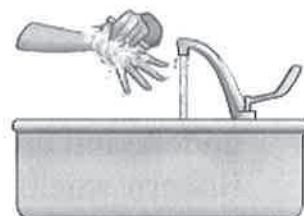
Damp mop floors and damp dust counters and furniture regularly



Wash dogs regularly



Wash children's toys regularly



Wash children's hands and feet after they have been playing outside

**\*If you think your child has been exposed to lead and/or are pregnant and would like blood lead testing contact Pueblo City-County Health Department for more information.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO BE PLACED ON OUR MAILING LIST CONTACT THE FOLLOWING:**

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