



Exide Battery Removal Site

Community Involvement Plan (CIP)

Logansport, IN

Feb 2024

Purpose of the CIP

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prepared this Community Involvement Plan (CIP) to inform residents and community members during the environmental assessment and cleanup of lead contaminated soil within areas surrounding the Exide Battery removal site, 303 Water Street, Logansport, IN.

The CIP provides a brief overview of ongoing removal activities while addressing community concerns, questions, expressed during community meetings, interviews, and email.

Overview of Site

Exide Battery site contaminants

At the Exide Battery removal site, the primary contaminant of concern is lead, a hazardous substance that targets the nervous system. Exposure to lead over long periods can cause high blood pressure, digestive problems, and nerve disorders.

Children and pregnant women are much more sensitive to lead than adults. Children who swallow large amounts of lead may develop blood anemia, severe stomachache, and muscle weakness. Even at much lower levels of exposure, lead can affect a child's mental and physical growth.

Exposure to lead commonly occurs through direct ingestion or inhalation. Potential lead exposure sources include lead-based paint in older homes, lead contaminated soil and dust, lead pipes and associated drinking water.

Exide Battery site background

EPA, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) soil investigations have confirmed elevated lead in soil levels in several residential properties surrounding the Exide facility. The 17 acres former Exide facility operated as a rail yard from 1885 to the 1930s. Exide purchased the property in 1959 and started manufacturing lead-acid batteries. The plant closed in 2009 and was demolished in 2016.

EPA and IDEM suspect lead contamination in the shallow surface soils may have traveled from the former Exide facility to the surrounding residential yards by tracking, surface runoff, and wind dispersion.

EPA Cleanup Activities



Figure 1: The area outlined in green is the area of concern for lead sampling and residential cleanup. The former Exide facility is outlined in yellow.

EPA cleanup activities at the former Exide Battery site

EPA soil investigations have prompted the EPA to take immediate “time-critical” action, as the contamination is found to pose an imminent health threat. EPA’s time-critical removal action will focus on the residential areas near the former Exide facility, rather than on the facility property itself.

At the former Exide Battery site, the area of concern (AOC) spans 55 acres and is roughly delineated by West Columbia Street to the north, South State Road 17 to the east, Bates Street to the south, and Balsam Street to the west. This area includes over 90 residential properties. So far, at least 21 properties have been identified by the EPA as contaminated and in need of cleanup. A substantial number of properties have yet to be tested.

If you own a property within the AOC, and would like it to be tested for possible lead in soil contamination, EPA encourages you to contact any of the following:

EPA Community Involvement Coordinator

Francisco Arcaute, 312-898-2042

arcaute.francisco@epa.gov

Se habla español.

EPA On Scene Coordinator

Lauren Hirschel, 312-480-7976

Hirschel.lauren@epa.gov

If your property is found to contain lead concentrations above EPA screening limits, EPA will provide clean-up at NO cost to the owner. This service is provided with the sole intention of protecting the health of the Logansport Community.

Starting in October 2023, EPA has been conducting cleanup activities of lead contaminated soil in yards of homes near the demolished Exide Battery facility. EPA completed 5 priority properties in November 2023 and will continue remediation of the remaining properties in the spring of 2024.

Clean-up Process

For properties near the former Exide Battery site, the cleanup will consist of the “dig and haul” approach. **Cleanup at your property is voluntary and at no cost to you.**

The three main components of the approach are Excavation, Backfilling, and Restoration.

Excavation physically removes the health threat from the property by digging up the soil and transporting it to an approved landfill.



Figure 2. Excavation of a yard with lead contamination

Backfilling refers to filling in the excavated property with clean soil.



Figure 3. Backfilling an excavated yard with clean

Restoration is the final step of the process and involves restoring the property to its original state, or a cost equivalent option as chosen by the residents.



Figure 4. Landscape restoration of a cleaned yard

Large trees and well-established bushes will be left in place and accommodations can be made for those who like to preserve additional plants.

Actual work for each yard will take about three to five days. EPA will work closely with each resident to make sure the cleanup satisfies your needs and schedules to the best extent possible. EPA plans to continue work in the spring of 2024. EPA will contact owners and tenants of every affected property in the defined area to schedule cleanup and restoration as needed.

EPA Community Outreach

Since 2023, EPA has communicated with residents, state and local officials, on the status of the cleanup.

Engagement activities to date:

- In 2021, EPA created a public response website –<https://response.epa.gov/ExideCorporation> which provides site information and is periodically updated to inform the public of EPA’s ongoing response activities.
- In 2022, EPA, along with Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), Cass County Health Department, and the City of Logansport, conducted a door knocking campaign throughout the AOC to inform residents of the lead cleanup and collect access agreements from willing participants.
- In 2023, EPA mailed fact sheets (in English and in Spanish) to residents within the AOC informing them of EPA’s upcoming removal work.
- On October 18, 2023, EPA hosted an availability session about the lead cleanup at the Columbia Elementary School Cafeteria, 20 E Columbia St., which was covered by the local press.
- EPA conducted air monitoring at the Columbia Elementary School during excavation work of the to ensure the safety of local residents.



Figure 5. EPA’s Public Availability Session at Columbia Elementary School

Next Steps

- OSC has direct contact with residents on a daily basis
- Continue open dialog with the community
- Continue soil sampling for affected residents
- Continue community air monitoring during excavation work
- Have availability sessions with agencies involved
- Update fact sheets and website

Additional Community Questions

How can I schedule soil sampling?

If your property is within the impacted area, EPA will test your yard for free to determine if a cleanup is necessary. To sign up for testing, call Lauren Hirschel at 312-480-7976 or Francisco Arcaute (Spanish Speaker) and mail your completed access agreement to:

Lauren Hirschel, EPA Region 5, 77 W. Jackson Blvd., SE-5J, Chicago, IL 60604

Is it safe to excavate yards?

Yard excavation can create some dust. For this reason, EPA monitors and samples the surrounding air during all excavation activities.

Monitoring and sampling will continue for all activities going forward. Furthermore, site workers are trained to follow safety procedures while excavating dirt to avoid contact with contaminants and prevent the spread of lead. Workers may wear masks to perform the work because they will be near dust for the entire period of the neighborhood cleanup.

However, it is safe for you and your children to be in the surrounding area. Excavation crews will continue to take precautionary measures to make sure the contaminated soil remains securely contained while it travels to appropriate disposal facilities.



Figure 6: Air monitoring device to detect air-



Figure 7: Air sampling device

Contact Information

EPA Contacts

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Exide Battery removal site online: [https://
response.epa.gov/ExideCorporation](https://response.epa.gov/ExideCorporation)

Repository Location: Logansport-Cass County
Public Library, 616 East Broadway, Logansport, IN 46947

Administrative Record: EPA Superfund Records Center, 77 W. Jackson Blvd., Room 711

Chicago, IL, 60604, Office: (312) 353-2000,
Toll free (800) 621-8431

Other Logansport, IN, Contacts

City Officials

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Congressional district

Cong. Jim Baird (IN-04)

<https://baird.house.gov/>