

Lowry Environmental Program

History

Lowry is a former Air Force Base that operated for 57 years as a technical training center.

Past activities at the former base included:

- Flight training and aircraft maintenance,
- Aerial photograph imaging and interpretation,
- Fire fighter training,
- Technical training on a variety of missile and weapon systems,
- Classroom instruction,
- Student and family housing, and
- Office-type administration.

Fuels and chemicals were stored and used to support these training activities, and disposal of these liquids was conducted in the same way that many industries handled similar wastes.

In 1994, the Air Force Base closed, and the Lowry Redevelopment Authority (LRA) began redeveloping the former base.

The Air Force conducted the first environmental investigations at Lowry in 1983. Since then, and with the funding committed in the 2005 privatization, the Air Force has spent more than \$100 million to identify, evaluate and remediate environmental contaminants. At Lowry, most of the environmental areas of concern have been identified, investigated and are in various phases of cleanup. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) along with the cities of Denver and Aurora and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continue to oversee this work.

Land is developed and sold at Lowry only after the CDPHE and EPA have commented that it is suitable for transfer based on the environmental condition of the property.

Cleanup Status

Properties already developed at Lowry were reviewed and approved by the CDPHE and EPA for their environmental condition, and were found to be suitable for reuse.

In August 2002, the Air Force began to privatize most of the environmental cleanup efforts turning management of the groundwater cleanup and the landfill closure over to the LRA and its contractor Lowry Assumption, LLC (LAC). In 2005, this process was expanded with agreements to privatize the remaining soil projects. While the Air Force maintains ultimate liability for the cleanup, the LRA manages the remediation. The privatization allowed remediation to continue on some parcels simultaneously with redevelopment.

Several well-documented groundwater plumes exist at Lowry. None are in drinking water; Lowry's drinking water comes from surface water reservoirs replenished each year by high mountain snowmelt.

During the first five years of privatization, a program to cleanup

the groundwater plumes has been implemented and the former base landfill has been closed. The average concentrations of TCE in alluvial groundwater have decreased approximately 90%. CDPHE has approved new residential and commercial development over the plumes with a deed restriction requiring use of a subsurface depressurization system (identical to radon mitigation system).

Under the scope of the expanded privatized cleanup, soils cleanup has been completed. Beginning in 2003, the LRA and several homebuilders removed soil containing asbestos in the Northwest Neighborhood, and under privatization, the asbestos sampling and removal was completed.

For More Information

You can receive more information on the environmental program at Lowry through the following:

Online Information: The Lowry web site (www.lowry.or/ecology) offers useful and updated information regarding the environmental program.

The Administrative Record for environmental cleanup at Lowry is online at <https://afarpa.af.mil/docsearch.aspx>. The Administrative Record is a compilation of significant environmental documents, correspondence and decision documents for Lowry's cleanup. Additional information can be found on the following Lowry cleanup program websites maintained by the CDPHE and LAC at: <http://cdphe.state.co.us/hm/lowryafb.htm> and <http://www.lowryafbcleanup.com>

Public Information Specialists: The LRA's environmental community relations specialist is Elizabeth Sopher at 303-948-4122 or esopher@irgco.com

Marilyn Null is the community involvement, environmental justice with CDPHE, and can be reached at 303-692-3304 or Mknnull@smtgate.dphe.state.co.us. The EPA contact for information on Lowry is Judith McCulley at 303-312-6667.

Library: The LAC, (located at 125 Rampart Way #302, Denver, CO 80230) houses environmental documents available for public review during business hours. Call 303-948-4122 for an appointment.