



Downgradient Investigation FAQ Sheet

1. *What is the purpose of the Downgradient Investigation?*

The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection's (NDEP) main purpose and focus is to evaluate the nature and extent of contamination in the area between Galleria Road and the Las Vegas Wash impacted by historic contamination via former ditches and other pathways originating from the former Kerr-McGee and Tronox Site. The Downgradient Investigation is being conducted by NDEP as part of the Nevada Environmental Response Trust's (NERT) ongoing Remedial Investigation, which focuses on the source areas and core plume south of Galleria Road.

2. *What is perchlorate?*

Perchlorate is a white crystalline salt that dissolves readily in water. In its commercial form as a solid, ammonium perchlorate serves as a powerful chemical that contributes to combustion of solid rocket propellant.

3. *What is the source of the perchlorate?*

The source of the perchlorate being investigated as part of the Downgradient Investigation is the NERT Site (formerly owned and operated by Kerr-McGee and Tronox), located within the Black Mountain Industrial Complex on Lake Mead Parkway in Henderson. Kerr-McGee/Tronox ceased production of perchlorate in 1998.

4. *Is my drinking water safe to consume?*

Yes, drinking water for Henderson and the Las Vegas Valley comes from Lake Mead which meets all drinking water standards.

5. *Is perchlorate or other chemicals from the NERT Site getting into the Las Vegas Wash or Lake Mead?*

Yes, perchlorate was discovered in Lake Mead in 1997. Since that time, levels of perchlorate have been reduced by over 90%. The purpose (as stated above) of this investigation is to investigate the nature and extent of perchlorate present in groundwater in the Downgradient Study Area. The Downgradient Study Area is shown on the enclosed map.

6. *What is the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) drinking water standard for Perchlorate?*

In 2011, the United States Environmental Protection Agency determined that perchlorate is a contaminant under the Safe Drinking Water Act and is in the process of setting a Maximum Contaminant Level for perchlorate in drinking water. Until the US EPA drinking water standard is set, the State of Nevada NDEP has established 18 parts per billion (ppb) in drinking water as a provisional action level based upon an US EPA drinking water advisory. The State of Nevada has determined that 18 ppb of perchlorate in drinking water is a safe level for all uses. The average perchlorate concentration in Lake Mead over the last 10 years has been less than 2.5 ppb.

7. *Has there been or will there be a soil or groundwater study in the area of my home?*

There have already been several rounds of sampling and investigation in the Downgradient Study Area. Depending on the location of your home, an investigation may have already occurred and there may be a report summarizing the environmental conditions in your area. If you would like to know if there has been an investigation in an area of interest you can review the Administrative Record for the Site. As investigations are completed they become a part of the Administrative Record. The Administrative Record is available for review in our NDEP Las Vegas office located at 2030 E. Flamingo Rd, Suite 230, Las Vegas, NV, 89119 and key documents are available on our website at <https://ndep.nv.gov/environmental-cleanup/site-cleanup-program/active-cleanup-sites/bmi-complex/nevada-environmental-response-trust-nert>. For future investigations, we will provide community notification of the area of the investigation and post the information on our website.

8. *Is there an imminent health risk to humans or animals in the Downgradient Study Area?*
No, there is no imminent health risk to humans or animals in the Downgradient Study Area. The perchlorate is found dissolved in groundwater and has not been identified in the soils in or around the Downgradient Study Area. Since the groundwater in the Downgradient Study Area is far below any residence and the groundwater is not a source of drinking water there is no imminent health risk to anyone in the Downgradient Study Area.
9. *Can I grow and eat my own vegetables?*
Yes, all information compiled to date shows that the soils in the Downgradient Study Area and in the surrounding residential areas are not dissimilar to any other soils in the Las Vegas Valley. Elevated levels of perchlorate have not been found in any soil samples within the Downgradient Study Area.
10. *Are my plants and landscaping affected by the perchlorate plume?*
No, elevated levels of perchlorate have not been found in any soil samples within the Downgradient Study Area.
11. *Do developers have information to inform potential buyers?*
Yes, current developers in the area have been given information about this issue and have procedures in place to inform potential buyers.
12. *What are the main perchlorate health risks related to humans and animals?*
Perchlorate is an endocrine disrupter; that interferes with the function of the thyroid gland. Additional information and links to other research can be found on our website here:
<https://ndep.nv.gov/environmental-cleanup/site-cleanup-program/active-cleanup-sites/bmi-complex/perchlorate>.
13. *Does the perchlorate plume impact the air in my home or outside?*
No, perchlorates are salts and they do not volatilize (evaporate and disperse into vapor). Perchlorate does not affect the air inside homes or the ambient air outside.
14. *Does perchlorate contamination in the groundwater pose an imminent health risk to humans or animals within the Downgradient Study Area?*
No, there is no imminent health risk to anyone in any of the homes or property in or around the Downgradient Study Area. The perchlorate is in the groundwater under the study area and this groundwater is not a source of drinking water, therefore, there is no exposure to humans or animals in the Downgradient Study Area to the perchlorate in the groundwater.
15. *What is the Nevada Environmental Response Trust?*
The Nevada Environmental Response Trust ("NERT") was established by the Bankruptcy Court as part of the settlement agreement entered into in Tronox Incorporated's Chapter 11 Bankruptcy. The exclusive purposes and functions of NERT are to own the former Kerr-McGee/Tronox property in Henderson (NERT Site) and fund the remediation of environmental impacts related to historic operations at the NERT Site.
16. *Who provides oversight over the Nevada Environmental Response Trust (NERT)?*
The NDEP is the lead agency and US EPA is the non-lead agency for purposes of overseeing administration of the NERT and NERT's implementation and funding of environmental actions related to the NERT Site.
17. *Will this affect my property values? Do I need to disclose this to a potential buyer of my home?*
The NDEP is a State of Nevada environmental agency and focuses on environmental matters. NDEP does not have expertise in real estate disclosure requirements. The NDEP recommends you contact your real estate professional to discuss these issues and make an informed decision.
18. *Is all of this information public knowledge?*
Yes, the Administrative Record is available for review in our NDEP Las Vegas office located at 2030 E. Flamingo Rd, Suite 230, Las Vegas, NV. 89119 and key documents are available on our NDEP website at <https://ndep.nv.gov/environmental-cleanup/site-cleanup-program/active-cleanup-sites/bmi-complex/nevada-environmental-response-trust-nert>.