



Lady Maroons set for '96
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Contamination not as bad as anticipated

Smelter cleanup updated for BIA

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The soil contamination in the Blackwell Industrial Park may not be as bad as first suspected, according to officials from two companies who will be directly involved in the eventual cleanup of the park and several residential areas.

Jim Carrigan, representing Cyprus-AMAX, the former owners of the Blackwell Zinc smelter site, and Walt Shields from PTI Environmental, the new project manager, told members of the Blackwell Industrial Authority on Thursday that the BIP contamination was limited.

According to Shields, based on reviews of recently completed soil

sampling there are only a few sites within the park that have contamination levels that exceed those allowed by the Environmental Protection Agency.

"Most of the industrial park is clean," said Shields, who has been overseeing the cleanup process at the Bartlesville smelter site.

Shields said the contaminated sites were located to the south of the main industrial park. For the most part, levels of contamination in the industrial park are at a point where the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality considers them safe.

Shields told members of the committee that ODEQ has completed its Record of Decision

(ROD). That is the final plan for remediation for the contaminated soil.

The plan has been sent to the EPA and is currently awaiting approval.

Once the ROD is finalized, he said, Cyprus-AMAX will have a direction in which to begin the remediation work.

"We are working on redevelopment and remedial plans now," Shields said.

According to Shields, it is hoped to have the remedial plan finalized and sent to ODEQ by late January.

Shields also said sampling of soil would likely continue through mid-1996, with actual work to begin the remediation expected later in the

year.

Jim Carrigan said to get the process implemented will take cooperation from everyone and will take planning at the sites.

Carrigan also said there are areas that will be given higher priority within the industrial park. Among those top priorities is the old Southwest Cupid Building, located on 13th Street.

"When the ROD is released, we will have a better understanding about how much dirt will have to be moved," Carrigan said.

The Cyprus-AMAX official also said it could be a year before the process is completed.

In the meantime, officials will work to create a form which can be

used by prospective industries that will allow them to obtain financing in the industrial park.

Tom Spence, a guest at the meeting, pointed out that many companies, given the option of a "greenfield" or a "brownfield" would go where there are fewer problems.

A brownfield is a location where there has been industry and may be some contamination of the land, while a greenfield is completely clean.

Carrigan agreed, but also pointed that while the Blackwell site will never be completely clean of any contamination, it will have advantages that a greenfield wouldn't.

"There is no way to make it a
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greenfield. There simply isn't enough money. The site has to be seen as a benefit because it was a former industrial site," Carrigan said, pointing out that utilities and roads are already in place.

And while the site will never be completely free of contaminants, it will be redeveloped and utilized to draw industries to the community.

Carrigan said in the future, there will be a lot of support for industries to utilize old industrial locations.

We want to make sure Blackwell sees this as a positive, not a negative. That is what is being accomplished," Carrigan said.

The Blackwell Zinc site, as well as a number of residential locations in the community, are currently part of a national pilot program, sponsored by the EPA.

The process involves the cleanup of soil contaminated by residue of the former Blackwell Zinc Smelter, which closed in 1974.

As a result of the smelter, residue containing several contaminants, including zinc, cadmium and arsenic, have been found in soil throughout the west edge of the community.

The contamination was originally found in 1988.