



**EXPLAINING** — Monty Elder of the Department of Environmental Quality explains the findings and resolutions concerning soil contamination in Blackwell. The documents are available to the public at the City Hall. (J-T Photo by CWA)

# Dirt will fly, DEQ tells Blackwell

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An update on the testing of soil samples for contamination was presented at a public meeting Wednesday night at the City Administration Building.

About 30 people were present to hear updates given by Monty Elder of the Department of Environmental Quality and Walt Shields with PTI Environmental Services.

Wednesday night's meeting was the latest in a series of meetings by the Department of Environmental Quality to keep the public updated on the progress of the work under way.

The testing is for contamination of lead, cadmium, arsenic and zinc in levels considered to be at risk for health standards by the Department of Environmental Services.

The primary area of concern has been immediately around the old smelter site between 13th and 20th streets.

The concentration of the heavy metals in heaviest in that location.

The industrial park area has the greatest risk because that is where the smelter was located for some 60 years.

Some contamination has been found east of 12th Street.

The sampling and clean-up is a long-term process. Shields said the soil work is expected to be finished in 1997 and groundwater work, if needed, in 1998.

With the soil work going into its later stages, more frequent meetings will be held.

Shields said another public meeting is expected in about six weeks.

Ms. Elder said soil sampling of yards in the affected areas is expected to be done by June or July and a remedial design plan in place by this winter.

She said none of the ground water affected by contamination is

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## Meeting

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in the public water supply.

Because of contaminants found in the Legion Park creek area, some dredging may be necessary to remove the contaminated soil.

Shields said sediment removal at the Legion Park may be speeded up.

According to information in what the Department of Environmental Services called a "record of decision" document, the major components for soil remediation include:

— Removal of contaminated soil from residential yards and consolidation of that material with other

contaminated soils on the former smelter plant location.

— Capping of the former smelter plant location.

— Institutional controls to assure the remedy will be maintained properly.

Elder said residential soil will be removed from the highest affected areas at depths of six inches and taken to the plant site.

The DEQ is looking at contamination of soil, groundwater and risk to wildlife.

The risk includes any that may affect humans eating fish from the Chikaskia River.