Immediate Release
May 1, 2015

EPA recently sampled soils at the Treasure Mountain Junior High School. Lead concentrations in the surface soils were elevated, averaging about 1600 ppm with a couple of sampling locations as high as 19,000 ppm. Students at the Treasure Mountain Junior High School are unlikely to be adversely effected by the lead found in soils at the school because:

- People typically only come into contact with and ingest the very surface layer of the soil (<1 inch in depth).
- The lead-contaminated soil at Treasure Mountain Junior High School is beneath 2 inches of clean sod and grass which forms a protective barrier
- As long as the sod and grass are intact, students should not be coming into contact with lead. If there is no exposure, then there is no risk.
- The bare areas in the field had low levels of lead which do not present a health concern during recreational activities.
- Adolescents are not as susceptible to the adverse effects of lead as younger children (< 7 years) are. Children less than 7 years of age are particularly susceptible to the effects of lead exposure because their neurological systems are rapidly developing, they ingest more soil, and they absorb lead more readily from their stomachs (their body thinks that lead is calcium). This is why they are more at risk for neurological effects such as attention deficit disorder, decreased attention span, and IQ deficits.
- As children grow older, these physiological conditions change and it takes significantly higher levels of lead to cause an adverse effect. Adults and adolescents can regularly work around lead contaminated soils averaging 2000 ppm without a concern for adverse effects. The soils directly under the sod average about 1600 ppm lead.
- The Park City Ordinance is intended to be protective of young children (<7 years of age) who live at their residence 24 hours/day and come into contact with bare soil every day. Students only come into contact with the fields and school exterior a few hours out of the day during the school year, so exposure is limited.

For those parents who think their children may have been exposed to elevated levels of lead in soil, a simple blood lead test may be helpful. We suggest you contact your personal physician to obtain a blood lead test. The Summit County Health Department (435) 333-0014 can also assist in the interpretation of blood lead results and provide guidance on protecting your child from lead poisoning.

For additional information on lead toxicity contact:

Utah Department of Environmental Quality (801) 536-4400
The National Lead Information Center 1-800-424-LEAD (5323)
EPA's Web Site on Lead www.epa.gov/lead